

A
CONTRITE
AND
HUMBLE
HEART.

WITH
Motives and Considerations
to Prepare it.

*A Contrite and Humble Heart, O
God, thou wilt not despise, Ps. 50.*

*Prepare your Hearts to God, and
Serve Him only, 1 Sam. 7.*

The Fifth Edition, Approv'd.

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CONTRITE

A D

H B L E

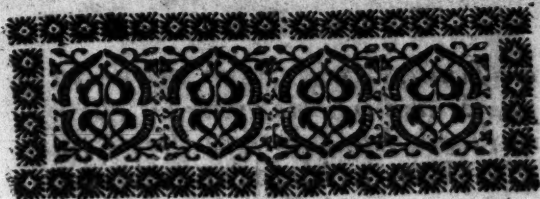
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Notes and Comments

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TO THE
READER.



THE Subject which I treat of is the Best of Hearts; a Contrite and an Humble One. A Heart which is the Price of Heaven. An inestimable Jewel, which deserves our selling all we have to purchase it. What Disadvantages it may have suffer'd in my Hand, who have prepar'd and fashion'd it according to my Fancy, I pretend not to excuse. As rough, and as unpolish'd as it is, the Jewel is entire; the interior Value of it is the same within it self, and that's abundantly sufficient to atone for all. Besides, Contrition and Humility affect not the Advantage of a modish Outside; plain Sincerity becomes them infinitely more. An hum-

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ble Penitent, who has an angry God to please, and tremble under his Almighty Hand, has something else to think of. When a Magdalen once comes with penitential Tears, to bathe her Saviour's Feet, she quite forgets her Looking-glass, and comes without consulting it. She brings her precious Ointments with her; but these are only for her Lord: They are not, either to adorn herself, or please the Company.

The Method I have follow'd, may, perhaps, seem Arbitrary, and require a Line or two to justify it. I begin with the Love of God. 1. Because it is the First, the Greatest, and indeed the Whole Duty of Man. 2. Because altho' the Practice of Repentance commonly begins with Fear, goes on with Hope, and ends in Love; yet, where our Practice ends, our Theory begins; and what is last perform'd, is generally first design'd, and principally aim'd at. 3. Because there is no ground for either Hope or Fear, before we know our Duty. When we know

To the READER.

know it, and consider well how little we observe it, then it is that we begin to tremble at the Thought of our Appearance at the Bar: The Terrour of a Living God awakens us, and makes us sensible, how Heb. 10. 13. fearful a Thing it is to fall into his Hands. For this Reason, in the second Place, I shew the general Motives of our Fear: Which, to prevent Despair, I counterballance with the Motives of our Hope: And, after all, because Presumption is the greater Danger of the two, (our Pride inclining us to think Repentance easy, and our Self-Love daily tempting to defer it,) therefore I have taken care to shew the Danger of Delay. These Preparations I thought proper for a Contrite and an Humble Heart.

When I describe Contrition, I enlarge much more upon the Resolutions of Amendment, than the Sorrow due to Sin; because these Resolutions are commonly the more neglected of the two. A little Melancholly, or a little Tendernefs of Nature, with no

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more than meerly Self-Love in the Case, may oftentimes produce a sensible Concern, and even Tears, when we reflect upon the Danger we are in: Though all this while, our darling Humours, our beloved Sins, are every jot as dear to us as ever. Some slight Thoughts we have, in general, of doing so no more; but these are only Superficial: They produce not a sincere and hearty Detestation of our Crimes: They are to God, what our Compliments are to our Neighbours; these are Words of course, and those are Thoughts of course; both signify just nothing.

These two Sections of Contrition

<p>* 91. Intr. Par. 1. Ch. 21.</p>	<p>* have been printed a-part, by One who Sign'd the Paper as his Act and Deed; inviting others to take Pen in Hand, and do the same. I Sign it not with my Hand; but only wish my Reader and my self may Sign it with our Hearts.</p>
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In

TO the READER.

In the first four Sections of Humility, I offer little or nothing of my own. It would not have become me, to pretend to much Acquaintance with so rare a Vertue. And besides, in such a Matter, so extremely disagreeable to our corrupted Nature, there was need of more Authority than mine.

I Conclude with the Character of a Good Christian. Having describ'd his Heart, I thought it would not be amiss to finish the Remainder of his Character. In this also, I advance not a Word of my own. Should I presume to draw a Christian to the Life, 'twould be in me as great a Vanity, as if my Reader should pretend to sit for the Picture. I produce the Scripture chiefly, and the Fathers, now and then a Modern Author: Any helping Hand was welcome in so difficult a Piece.

No matter Who I am, I am a Son of the Church; and submit my self
A 4 *entirely*

To the READER.

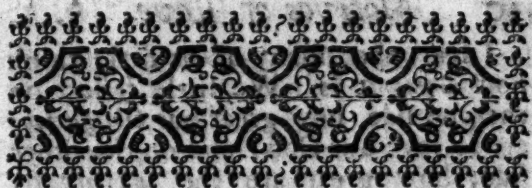
† S. Pacin, *entirely to Her.* † My
B. of Bar- *Name is* CHRISTIAN,
celone. *and my Sirname* CA-
THOLICK; *therest I*
have leave to conceal. God's Honour,
and my Neighbour's Good, is all I
aim at: And, as to either of these
Designs, I have no other Name, but
what is altogether useless.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IN this Edition, I have alter'd no-
thing but the last Section of *Humi-*
lity, in which I have omitted three
Articles. I was advis'd to it by a
Friend; and would not argue the Mat-
ter with a Person, whom I have so
much Reason to think wiser than my
self. As to my own Judgment, I am
still of a contrary Opinion; and should
not have so easily submitted, had I not
reflected, that I ought to practice the
Humility I preach.



MO-



MOTIVES OF LOVE.

SECT. I.

*How much it imports us to Love God
above all Things.*

WHEN the Pharisee ask'd
our Saviour, *Matth. 22.*
36. What is the great Com-
mandment in the Law? Our
dear Redeemer, who came to perfect
the Old Law, who came to change the
Law of *Fear* into a Law of *Love*, who
brought down Fire from Heaven, to
enflame our Hearts, reply'd, *ver. 37, 38.*
Thou shalt Love the Lord thy God with all
thy Heart, with all thy Soul, with all thy
Mind. This is the Great Commandment.

10 *Motives of Love. §. 1.*

I fear, that many of us little think how *Great* it is. We little reflect on the one side, how great our *Obligations* are to love our God; and on the other side, how great are the *Advantages* which cannot fail to attend this Love. We little consider, how great our *Ingratitude* is, if we omit our *Greatest Duty*; how great our *Folly* is, if we neglect our *Greatest Good*.

S E C T. II.

That the Love of God is our Greatest Duty.

TO make it plainly appear, that the Love of God above all things, is the *Greatest Duty* of a Christian; one would think, it were enough to shew, that 'tis a Duty which comprizes all our other Duties; that it is the total Sum of Christianity; and that without the least Hyperbole, it is the *Whole Duty of Man*; because, all other Precepts whatsoever, only are so many Branches of this *Great Commandment*, which is the Root of all the rest. St. Cyprian calls it the *Grand Epitome* of all our Obligations. And were it necessary, it were easie to demonstrate, that as God is therefore infinitely Perfecter than



§. 2. *Motives of Love.* 11

than all his Creatures, because He really contains in his own Essence all Perfections whatsoever; so our *Obligation* to love him, is incomparably greater than all other Obligations, because it eminently comprehends them altogether.

This is enough to give us a confus'd Idea of our *Duty* at a distance. If we draw the Prospect nigher, we shall find an infinite variety of pressing Motives which enforce our Obligation. Every single Excellency of the Object we adore is all Divine: No Shadow thereof any Blemish to obscure those Charms which challenge our Affection: Nothing in our God, but what is infinitely Amiable, and deserving infinitely more than *All* the Love that we are able to return. Since therefore All and every one of his innumerable Excellencies are unlimited and boundless; since they All and every one deserve a suitable Esteem, since they command our Love as much as they deserve it: Hence it follows clearly, that our Duty is as boundless as their Merit; and that, as *Sr. Bernard* says, *There is no other Measure of our Love, than loving without Measure.*

Amongst the numberless Variety of those Divine Perfections, which the Eye has not seen, nor the Ear heard, nor have en-
ter'd

12 *Motives of Love.* §. 2.

ter'd into the Heart of any Man, 1 Cor. 2. 9.

There is one which we are more acquainted with; there's one, which in a manner makes the rest our own; and which of all, is the most apt to make a sensible Impression in a generous Heart;

I mean, that of a *True Friend*. We read in *Ecclesiasticus*, 6. 15. that *there is nothing comparable to a True and Faithful Friend*:

And that, in the Ballance of the Wise, *He weighs much more than all the Gold and Silver in the World*.

As there is nothing better upon Earth than a *True Friend*, so there is nothing more pretended to.

And as the World deceives us most, where we expect it least, so there is hardly any thing in which it more deceive us, than in this.

Of all that read these Lines, perhaps there is not one, who has not been already very much mistaken in a *Friend*;

and 'tis no wonder, if we always are so, till we raise our Hearts above this World, and fix them there, where we

are sure to find a *True and Faithful One*; who Loves us *gratis*, always Lov'd us;

Lov'd us even *when we were his Enemies*; and will for all Eternity, continue the

same Love, unless we prove *ungrateful*, and refuse to love Him above all things, as He very well deserves.

He

§. 2. *Motives of Love.* 13

He loves us *gratis*: Not for any Good He gains by it, or any little Service we can do him. He cannot stand in need of any of those Goods, which every Moment He bestows upon us. *Thou art my God*, says the Psalmist, *Psal. 16. 2. My Goodness extend not to Thee.* When we have done all we can, *Luke 17. 10. We are unprofitable Servants*: We have done our selves the greatest Good, we can imagine; but our God is not a jot better for't. *The Lib. 10. Fountain*, says *St. Austin*, *de Civ.* is not better for our drinking at the Stream, nor the Sun the better for our walking by his Light. If I may use *St. Paul's* Expression, *2 Cor. 12. 14. He seeks not what is Ours, but Us.* He seeks for nothing but our Love, and even this Command He lays upon us, meerly for our Good, *Deut. 10. 12, 13. And now*, says He, *What does thy Lord thy God require of thee, but to Love Him with all thy Heart? which I command thee, this Day, for thy Good.* Behold, dear Christians, a True and Faithful Friend! And see how you can answer it to your good Nature, if you do not love Him.

He always lov'd us, always thought of us; not only all of us in general, but every one of us; and lov'd us with a
Love.

14 *Motives of Love.* §. 2.

Love eternal as Himself. He says, in the Prophet *Jeremy*, Ch. 13. 3. *I have lov'd Thee with an Eternal Love; therefore with loving Kindness have I drawn Thee.* And what more powerful Attractive can there be, to draw us to Him; than that *Loving Kindness* which from all Eternity, took care of our Concerns, contriv'd our future Happiness, and drew a Scheme of all the necessary Means to bring us to it. Except himself, He hardly thought of any thing but Us; our first Creation, our Redemption, our Salvation, were always in his Eye; they were the Eternal Entertainment of his Mind; they were the Great Design which gave occasion to the first Production of this World, which we ungratefully prefer before Him, though He made it for us, *Ecc. 9. 14. Never forsake your Old Friend, your New one will never be like Him.* Alas! who can help it, if we will be so ungrateful, and forsake so ancient a Friend? We may be sure, it is impossible to find a new one comparable to Him.

He lov'd us, even when we were his *Enemies*. 'Tis true, the first Production of the Universe was proof enough; and no Man can deny, but that so great a Gift bestowed upon us for our Use,
abun-

§. 2. *Motives of Love.* 15

abundantly sets forth the Greatness of his Love. But yet the whole Creation of the World, is nothing to the constant Conservation of it for our sakes, who have so long, so much abus'd it. If the first bestowing of a more than ordinary Favour, without any previous Merit on our side, be such an Argument of more than ordinary Love, what is the constant Repetition and Continuation of the same so long a Time; although the longer we enjoy it, we demerit more and more, and are as *obstinate* in our *Ingratitude*, as He is *constant* in his *Kindness*? Was there ever any *true* and *hearty* Love like this! St. Paul expresses some Resemblance of it in a second Letter, which he writes to the *Corinthians*, and declares his Readiness to serve them, 1 Cor. 12. 15. *Though* (says he) *the more abundantly I love you, the less I am lov'd.* We read it in the 12th Chapter, which relates his Rapture into the third Heaven: And without all doubt, this Love of his was copied there from the Divine Original. If one small Spark of this Celestial Love had such a wonderful Effect in the Apostle's Breast: What can we say or think of that immense and boundless Fire of everlasting Love, which no Ingratitude of Man was ever able to extinguish!

tinguish ! Though our God foresaw how much it was in vain to court our Love, although He was not ignorant that his Affection for so base, and so unworthy Creatures, would be more despis'd, the more he labour'd to endear us to him ; though he knew before-hand, the unparallell'd Ingratitude of Man : Nevertheless, He sent his only Son to save us ; He could not hold his Hand ; He could not deny himself the Satisfaction of being infinitely Kind. *Be astonish'd, O ye Heavens at this !* Jer. 2. 12.

St. John discoursing of this Love, takes notice of no other Motive of it, than our *Gratitude* ; our indispenfible Obligation to be Grateful to so Good a Friend. *We love Him*, says he, *because he first lov'd Us*, 1 Jo. 4. 19. He does not say, because He's infinitely Good and Perfect *in himself*, but because He has been infinitely Good and Kind *to us*. His Reason I gather from the 12th Ver. of the same Chapter, where he says, *No Man has seen God at any time*, and the 20. where he adds, *How can a Man Love God, whom he has not seen ?* If we had ever seen him *Face to Face*, 1 Cor. 13. 12. as all the blessed Spirits do in Heaven, we should then have lov'd Him *here* as they do *there* : The very Sight of Him (al-
though

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though He never had been Kind) would have transported us beyond all thoughts of any thing but Him ; it would have been impossible to entertain the least Impression of any other Love, in Competition with him. But, because this Happiness is not to be expected here, where 'tis impossible to *see him as he is*, 1 Joh. 3. 2. Therefore St. John the Disciple whom JESUS loved, Jo. 21. v. 7. who by Experience knew, that no Impression sinks deeper in a generous Heart, than the endearing Obligation of returning Love for Love, pleads nothing else but *Gratitude*, for the fulfilling of this Great Commandment ; *We Love Him*, says he, *because he first loved us*, 1 John 4. 19.

There's nothing more obliging, than the *Love of a True Friend* ; and nothing else obliges us without it. Whatsoever the interior Value of a Benefit amounts to, when we cast it up, the Obligation is not tax'd by any other Weight or Measure, than his *Love* to whom we stand indebted for it. In this Case, *Ingratitude*, of all Crimes, is the most unpardonable, a Crime so base, which Human Nature so abhors, that even the worst of Men, who are asham'd of nothing else, can never endure, that any
Man

18 *Motives of Love.* §. 2.

Man should either *say* or *think*, they are *Ungrateful*. Other Sins they publish to the World, but this they always labour to conceal. And tho' I scarce can think of any *Wickedness* so infamous, but some have been so wicked as to Glory in it; yet *Ingratitude* is so *Unworthy*, carries so much *Baseness* in the very Front of it, that I could never hear of any that were ever proud of being thought *Ungrateful*. Rather than a Man should think they are so, they invent a Thousand frivolous Pretences to disown the Obligation; they quarrel with the Benefit; revile the Benefactor; and that they may deny a *less* Ingratitude, they hide it with a *greater*. So asham'd they are to own this Fault, that they had rather be a thousand times *Ungrateful*, than be once *esteem'd* so.

This is the Crime which many of us are so guilty of, although we are as much *unwilling* to believe it, as we are *asham'd* to own it. And one of the most notorious Aggravations of our great *Ingratitude* is this; that we not only are so, but are in a manner quite insensible of being so. Because our God is infinitely *more* our Friend than any other can be, therefore we regard him infinitely *less*. We cannot without Indignation,

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dignation, observe one Man ungrateful to another : *The very Story of an ungrateful Action*, says Seneca, puts us out of all *Patience*, and gives us a loathing for the *Author of it*. That inhuman Villain, we cry, to do so horrid a Thing ! And yet, when we observe, how horribly ungrateful a poor miserable Creature is to our Creator, we take little notice of it ; we regard it with a cold Indifference, as if we were content it should be so.

We cannot plead in our Defence, that we are ignorant, how much we stand indebted to him for his Love : Alas ! we all know well enough, that there was never any Love like his : So *True*, so *Ancient*, and so *Constant*. If we plead Forgetfulness or Inadvertency, 'twill only make the Matter worse, by offering to mend it. *He is the most ungrateful of all*, says the Moral Philosopher, who forgets either the Benefactor, or the Benefit. And yet, when we have made the best we can of an ill Cause, 'tis certain, that the *true*, if not the *only Reason*, why we are insensible of our Ingratitude, is, because we seldom call to mind, and almost quite forget, how great our Obligation is to Love our God, because he first loved us, 1 John 4. 19.

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All the Ends of the World, says the Psalmist, shall Remember, and be Converted to God, Psal. 22. 28. Let us Remember only what a Friend God is; how infinitely better than the Best we have besides: Let us Remember only This, and we shall be Converted: We shall be asham'd of our Ingratitude, and Love him above all Things.

S E C T. III.

That the Love of God is our Greatest Good.

Whatever our Duty is, the very Word Commandment is always odious to those who love their Liberty, and makes it so much harder to go down with them. But yet, if after second Thoughts upon the Matter, we discover that one Reason, why it is our Greatest Obligation, is, because it is our Greatest Good; the Yoke will then seem easy, and the Burthen light, Matth. 11. 30.

Three Things there are, which gain our Hearts, command our Inclinations, and in a manner govern all our Actions; and these three Things are, Honour, Profit, Pleasure. Whatsoever we call Good, falls under one of these three Heads; 'tis either Honourable, Profitable, or Delightful. All these three accompany the Love of God, and none of them are ever to be found without it. 1. To

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I. To begin with *Honour* : I take for granted, no Man ought to judge, that *this or that* is *Honourable*, because the generality of Mankind, by mistake, is apt to value and admire it ; but before he gives his Verdict, every Man should first consider well the Merits of the Cause. A wise Man, though he liv'd amongst a Multitude of Infidels, and saw how much they honour and adore false Gods, he would not therefore presently conclude such Idols *Honourable* ; but would rather laugh at those who are so Blind, as not to see how little *They* deserve it. The Question is not, what we (by a vulgar Error) are inclin'd to *Honour* most, but, what it is that is most worthy of it ? And this upon a strict Enquiry, will appear to be the *Love of God* ; *Honour*, at all Hands, is agreed to be a *Testimony* of some Excellence ; and Nothing can be truly *Honourable*, if it be not truly *Excellent*. A Man has no just Title to his Honour (any more than what the common Duties of Civility amount to,) if he have not something in him more then ordinary, some Perfection to distinguish him, and raise him to a height more elevated then the lowest Rank of Men.

The

22 *Motives of Love.* §. 3.

The Qualities which justly challenge Men's Esteem, are *Wisdom, Justice, Power,* and whatsoever raises us to the Perfection of our Nature. As

2.2.9.47. for *Wisdom*: S. Thomas of
a. 13. *Aquine* has demonstrated, that
no Man can be truly *Wise,*

who does not love God above all things. He may be, says he, a *wise Merchant, or a wise Pilot, a wise States-Man, or a wise General;* because he may be *Prudent in the choice of proper Means, well fitted to the Purpose and Design of such Employments;* but 'tis impossible, to be a *wise Man,* without being *Wise in order to the proper End of MAN,* the great Design of his Creation, which is nothing but the *Knowledge and the Love of God.* A Magistrate, who is created meerly for the *publick Peace,* whatever he may be in other things, if he be not *Wise in order to that End,* He is not a *wise Magistrate.* And since all Mankind was created to be happy in an everlasting Union with God whatever a Person may be in other Affairs, if he be not *Wise in order to this End,* he may be a *Wise what you please,* but he is not a *wise MAN.*

As for *Justice,* I would gladly know, how any Man is throughly and truly *Just,* who is perpetually Guilty of the
most

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most notorious injustice we can think of. Such is the Man, whoe're he be, that does not *love* his Maker as he ought. 'Tis true; He only is unjust to God; he only wrongs himself; he never wrong'd his Neighbour, may be all his Life. But what could you say of a Steward who *only* cheats his Master? Would you think him a just Man, because he never cheats his Fellow-Servants?

As for *Power*: I confess it may be *Great*, in some particular respects, but never can be *Absolute*, without the *Love* of God. I may say the same of *Power*, that St. *Thomas* says of *Wisdom*. A Man without this Love may be a *Powerful Prince*, a *Powerful Warriour*, or the like; because, without it he may have all *Power* necessary for the main Design of Government, or War, &c. But, since without this *Love*, he neither can *Command* his *Passions*, nor himself; 'tis evident, he has not all the *Power* necessary to attain the proper End of Man's Creation. In a Word, he is no *Powerful* Man, who is not Master of himself.

Thus you may plainly see, how these three Characters of *Wise*, *Just*, *Powerful*, which are the most esteem'd and honour'd in the World, are only Shadows, and imper-

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imperfect Semblances, if separated from the *Love of God*. You plainly see, that it not only is the greatest *Excellence of Man*, most *Honourable*, most *Deserving* our *Esteem*; but that, without it, there is hardly any thing which truly is so.

2. As it is our *Greatest Honour*, so it is our *greatest Profit*. *St. Paul* was so sensible of this, that though the *Fervour* of his *Zeal* appears in all his *Writings*, yet he never speaks with greater *Emphasis*, that when he has a fair occasion to discourse upon this Subject. *Though I speak, says he, with the Tongues of Men and Angels, and have not Charity, I am become like sounding Brass, or a tinkling Cymbal. And though I have the gift of Prophecy, and understand all Mysteries, and all Knowledge; and though I have all Faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and though I give my Body to be burn'd; and have not Charity, it profits me nothing, 1 Cor. 13.* He has reckon'd up the greatest Gifts, and best Advantages that he could call to Mind; and yet he says, they all are Nothing to our Purpose, without Love. On the other side, the same Apostle teaches us, that all things else are profitable with it, though they never can be so without it.

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it. *We know, says he, that all Things work together for good, to those who Love God, Rom. 8. 28. The Secret of changing all Things into Gold, has in vain long time been sought for; but the Mystery of changing all meanest of our Actions into more than Gold, is much more easy to be found. Whatever ye do, says St. Paul, do all to the Glory of God, 1 Cor. 10. 31, and every thing you do will have more Value in his Sight, than all the Gold and Silver in the World. The least Degree of Love, the coldest Act of Charity, even the giving a Cup of cold Water, for the Love of God, our Saviour tells us, shall in no wise lose its Reward, Matth. 10. 42. So true is that of St. Austin, All Things else are profitable with it; nothing else is truly so without it.*

3. As it is our *Greatest Profit*, so it is our *Greatest Pleasure*: There is nothing so *Delightful*, even in this World, as to *Love God with all our Heart, with all our Soul, with all our Mind*. 'Tis hard enough, I know, to make the World believe it: Because, although the Truth be in it self as clear and bright as the Meridian Sun, our Passions raise a cloudy Mist before our Eyes, which intercepts the Sight of it. All Persons, whose Affections are fix'd upon the Pleasures

of this World, can hardly ever be persuaded, but that the *Love of God* is the dullest, and the most insipid Thing imaginable. They easily conceive, that nothing is so *Honourable*, as to be a *Saint*; and that it is but a very little *Profit* for a Man to *gain the World, and lose his Soul*, *Matth. 16. 26.* The *Honour* and the *Profit* are agreed upon, but where's the *Pleasure*? All that can be said upon this Subject, they are unacquainted with, they understand it not. He preaches in an *unknown Tongue*, who preaches the *Love of God* to those who never lov'd him. *The Language of Love, says St. Bernard, is barbarous to those who love not.*

As soon as ever they begin to turn their Backs upon these rotten Pleasures, and look towards Heaven; presently these Darlings of their Heart
Conf. begin, as it were, *To pull them*
Lit. 8. *by the Sleeve, as St. Austin words*
it, and whisper in their Ear, Do
you forsake us? And from this Moment shall
we have your Company no more, FOR E-
VER? Shall we NEVER see you more?
 Thus they solicit, thus they importune, and tempt them, to defer the Time of their Conversion. *Do you think it possible to live without the Pleasures of this World? Ah Christians! 'Tis not only possible;*

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possible; it is the *Greatest Pleasure* in the World to live without them. 'Tis true, the very Thoughts of Separation are like Thoughts of Death: But then we ought to reflect; that as we feel no Pain when we are Dead, but all our Pain is only whilst we are in Dying: So we feel the Pain of leaving worldly Pleasures, whilst we are *Deliberating* what to Do; But we are Dead, we feel no Pain at all, when once we are Resolv'd upon't. *You are Dead*, says St. Paul to the Colossians, Col. 3. 3. *and your Life is hidden with Christ in God.* *I am Dead*, says the same Apostle to the Galatians, Gal. 2. 19, 20. *and the Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who lov'd me.* See the powerful Effects of Love! It makes us as insensible to all the Pleasures of this World, as if our Inclinations were already Dead, and quite extinguish'd in us. *Cant. 8. 6. Love is as strong as Death.*

'Tis this victorious Love which frees us from the Tyranny of all those Passions, which divide the Kingdom of our Heart: A Kingdom brought to Disolation; where Satan casts out Satan; and how can this Kingdom stand? Matth. 12. 25, 26. How is there any true Consent and Satisfaction to be found in it? A Man who

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places all his Happiness in humouring his Passions, can never please himself, till he has pleas'd them all : And, since it is impossible to please *two Masters*, how is't possible for any Man to please *so many*? I might here appeal to each Man's private Conscience, for a farther Testimony of this Truth : But, if a fullen Conscience (even when it is upon the Wrack) refuses to confess, we have the Word of God, the best and clearest Evidence we can desire : *The Wicked, says he, Isa. 57. 20, 21. are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest ; whose Waters cast up Mire and Dirt : there is no P E A C E, says my God, to the Wicked.*

On the other Side, when once the Love of God has full Possession of our Heart, when Christ Governs it by Faith, and the Holy Ghost by Charity ; when the Spirit of God begins to move upon the Face of the Waters, Gen. 1. 2. it presently commands the Winds and the Sea, Matth. 8. 26. and there succeeds a great Calm. In a word, as much as Liberty is more agreeable than Slavery, as much as Unity is better than Division, as much as Peace, Content, and Ease, are more Delightful than perpetual Disturbance, Discontent and Pain, so much the Pleasure which attends the Love of God, is Greater than the Pleasures of this World. Had

§. 3. *Motives of Love.* 29

Had it been possible for our Creator to oblige us all to *Love* him *gratis*, we might then have had more colour for our Crime. And yet it would have been no more than what he very well deserves. He lov'd us *gratis*, without any possibility of Recompence: He humbled himself to repair our *Honour*; he quitted Heaven to promote our *Interest*; he suffer'd Torments to procure our *Ease*; and it would only be a suitable Return, if we preferr'd his *Honour*, *Interest* and *Pleasure*, far before our own. But, as our kind and gracious God has order'd it to our Advantage, we are all oblig'd to seek our own true Honour, Interest, and Pleasure, and despise the false Appearances of Honourable, Profitable and Delightful, which the World endeavours to delude us with.

When we have made the most we can of such an Obligation, 'twill amount to neither more nor less than what we daily see before our Eyes. Consider how the Ambitious, the Covetous, and the Voluptuous, love their Honours, Riches, Pleasures: Is it not plain, they love them above all Things? And why should not we love God as well as Worldlings love the World? They love it *with all their Heart*, they desire nothing else, but

30 *Motives of Love.* §. 3.

to enjoy it; *with all their Soul*, they have no passion for any thing else; *with all their Mind*, they think of nothing else, but how to make a Figure in it. Has God less Charms than the World? Or is a flattering Friend (well known to be our greatest Enemy,) more amiable than the best of Friends, most true, most ancient, and most constant, who has always lov'd us better than we love our selves? Is it a greater Honour for a Man to be the Devil's Slave, than to be a Favourite of God? Is it a greater Profit to be cheated in the End, than be eternally Rewarded; or, are those Pleasures, which are always mix'd with intervals of Discontent, Anxiety and Pain, greater than those Delights which are Unchangeable, Immortal, and Divine; which, even in this Vale of Misery, begin our Heaven upon Earth? Ah Christians! We have little reason to dispute the Terms of such an Obligation, where the whole Advantage is entirely on our Side: So great Advantage, that we cannot truly love our selves, unless we *love our Lord our God, with all our Heart, with all our Soul, with all our Mind*, Matth. 22. 38. This is not only our greatest Duty, but our greatest Good.

S E C T.

§. 4. *Motives of Love.* 31

S E C T. IV.

That the Love of God is the chief Grace of the Holy Ghost.

I AM come, says our Saviour, to send Fire on the Earth, Luke 12. 22. and what do I desire, but that it may be kindled? This he desires; for this he came, and this we pray for, in the Service of the Church: *Come Holy Spirit, fill the Hearts of thy Faithful, and kindle in them the Fire of thy Love.*

The Holy Ghost came visibly at first, and prov'd his Presence by the Miracles he did. But yet a Spirit is not naturally sensible; and when he comes invisibly, he comes more like himself; nor have we any reason (when he dwells within us) to suspect, that he is less at home, because he less appears abroad. Altho' we do not see the Fire descend, and rest upon our Heads; yet, if the Love of God enflame us, if it burn within our Hearts, if it appear in our Devotion, in our Conversation, in our Actions, 'tis enough, we then may hope, we have receiv'd the Holy Ghost, and that our Saviour verifies in us his Promise, which he made us, when he said, *he shall be in you.* John 14. 17. He did not come into the World, to visit the Apostles only,

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and abandon their Posterity: Our Saviour did not send him to us, that he might immediately forsake us, but that he might remain with us for ever, to the End of the World. *I will pray my Father, says he, that he may abide with you for ever, John 14. 16.*

The Spirit of God *shall be in us.* 'Tis a solemn Promise of our Saviour himself; we cannot doubt of it, although we cannot but admire it with profound Astonishment, like that of Solomon, *Will God dwell with us on the Earth, 1 Kings 3. 8, 27.* Will the Spirit of God not only dwell here with us, but within us! *If Heaven, says he, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this House which I have builded!* If we find, that Solomon was thus transported when he look'd upon his Temple, and compar'd it with the Majesty of God, to whom he built it; may not we admire much more the Living Temple of the Holy Ghost? *If the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain the Spirit of God, how much less this little House of Clay?* Can we imagine, that this little Heart of ours, is more capacious than Heaven? Or, can our Heart contain our God, if Heaven cannot? Oh no! Our God is Infinite; he cannot be contain'd in either,

§. 4. *Motives of Love.* 33

ther, and yet he dwells in both. Hear the *Psalmist*, *To thee I lift up my Eyes, O thou that dwellest in the Heavens*, *Psal.* 122.

1. Hear *St. Paul*; *You are the Temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in you*, *1 Cor.* 3. 16. Compare both Testaments, the Old and New; and if you seriously believe them both, conclude, we have the same Assurance that God dwells in Vertuous Souls, as that he dwells in Heaven.

The Kingdom of God is within you, *Luke* 17. 21. Wheresoever Majesty resides, the Court is there; and wheresoever the King governs, there his Kingdom is. If the *Almighty* govern all the Passions, Motions, and Affections of our Souls; if once he be the Sovereign Monarch of our Hearts, if the Love of God give Law to all our Inclinations, the Holy Ghost is then as truly in us, as the King is in his Kingdom, and he is no otherwise in Heaven. This is that Heaven upon Earth which none can understand, but those devout and pious Souls, who by Experience Taste and See, *Psal.* 33. 9. how Sweet God's Kingdom is, where Christ governs by Faith, and the Holy Ghost by Charity; or (as *St. Austin* says,) *Whose King is Truth, whose Law is Love.*

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A Spirit, having no Proportion with Place (if we believe Philosophers,) is neither *here*, nor *there*, nor *any where*, of *it self*; but only by its Operation in a Body, which is in some Place. When Angels formerly appear'd with Airy Bodies, they were truly and substantially present in those Human Forms, which they inhabited by operating there. Whatever the Airy Body *seem'd* to do, the Angel *truly* did, the Angel *mov'd*, the Angel *walk'd*, the Angel *spoke*, *discours'd*, *convers'd* with Men. The Holy Ghost is likewise truly and substantially present in the Soul of a devout and pious Christian. He dwells in his Heart by operating there; his Heart becomes a Paradise on Earth: The Love of God, now planted in the *middle* of it, is the *Tree of Life*, Gen. 2. 9. The Holy Ghost himself becomes the Angel-Guardian of the Place, and like the Cherubim, defends it with a *Flaming Sword*, Gen. 3. 24. He gives him Life, *We live by the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 25. He gives him Motion, *We walk by the Spirit*; He gives him Speech, *'Tis not you that speak*, says our Saviour to his Apostles, *but the Spirit of God that speaks in you*, Matth. 10. 20.

(So far you see the Parallel betwixt the Presence of an Angel dwelling in an Airy

§. 4. *Motives of Love.* 35

Airy Body, and the Presence of the Holy Ghost inhabiting in us. Only this Difference there is. Philosophers are puzzl'd to explain the *Virtue* and the *Operation* by which an Angel moves the Body it assumes; but Christians, by the Light of Faith, have this Advantage over them: They plainly read, and understand in Scripture, that the *Virtue* of the Holy Ghost, by which he moves and governs us, is *Charity*; and, that the *Operation*, which *with us*, he produces *in us*, is the *Love of God* above all things. God the Holy Ghost is *Charity*, 1 John 4. 8. He is the *Consubstantial Love of God* the Father and the Son. If *Charity* inspire us, if the *Love of God* direct us, govern us, and influence the principal Designs and Actions of our Life, we then may reasonably hope, *we have not receiv'd the Spirit of this World, but the Spirit which is of God*, 1 Cor. 2. 12.

That Inclination which is predominant, and governs all the rest, is usually call'd the Spirit of a Man. If this be Love of Honours, Riches, Pleasures of this World, 'tis an ambitious, a covetous, a carnal, or (to speak them all at once,) a worldly Spirit. But if it be the Love of God above all things, without any competition of Creatures,

36 *Motives of Love.* §. 4.

'tis a Virtuous, a Divine, a Holy Spirit: Then it is that the *Love of God is diffus'd in our Hearts, by the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit which is given to us, Rom. 5. 5.*

St. Paul, when he came to Ephesus, and found certain Disciples, demanded of them, *Have ye receiv'd the Holy Ghost; since ye believ'd?* Acts 19. 1, 2. And I am apt to think, it would not be amiss, to put the Question to the Christians of our Age. You in whose *Minds* Christ dwells by *Faith*, does the Holy Ghost dwell in your *Hearts* by *Charity*? Is your *Love* suitable to your *Creed*? Do you love God, as you believe he deserves? Do you love him above all things? Your greatest Care, is it to please your God? Your greatest Grief, is it to have displeas'd him? In all things, which deserve Deliberation, do you first consult his Law, and make it the Rule of all your Measures? Examine well the whole Course of your Life; your Actions, Humours, and Designs. What is it that employs your Mind the most? What Thoughts are those which close your Eyes at Night, and open them next Morning? Are they fix'd upon the *Only Necessary*? Do they tend to Heaven? All things else, what are they? Are they *Nothing* in com.

§. 4. *Motives of Love.* 37

comparifon of *That*? If fo, you have receiv'd the Holy Ghofl, the Spirit of God, *whom the World cannot receive*, Joh. 14. 17. But, if the fovereign Inclination of your Hearts be love of Honours, Riches, Pleafures; if your greateft Grief and Trouble be your Difappointment of Succels in thefe; if upon all Occafions you confult your Inclinations, and the Maxims of the World: Your then may answer, as the *Ephesians* did: Alas! we are but little acquainted with this Holy Spirit; we have fcarce heard of him, we know not what he is: A worldly Spirit we have more acquaintance with; but, as for the Spirit of God, he is a Stranger to us. We fay our Prayers, we frequent the Sacraments; we are in the common Road of customary Duties: But our ambitious Spirit; our impatient love of Honour, is fuch, that we are more concern'd for an Affront, than for a mortal Sin: Our avaricious Spirit; our infatiable Love of Riches is fo violent, that we had rather hazard the lofs of all the Heaven we pretend to, than expofe the Treafure we poffefs: Our carnal Spirit, our incontinent Love of Pleafure is fo paffionate, that we had rather quit our Right to all Eternal Joys above, than any way deny

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38 *Motives of Love.* §. 4.

our selves the rotten Satisfaction we seek for here below: In short, we love this World so much, that if we might but always have it at Command, 'tis All we ask, we wish no more: *We have receiv'd the Spirit of this World,* 1 Cor. 2. 12.

I hope I may be pardon'd, if I am a little importune in pressing home this Question; *Have you receiv'd the Holy Ghost?* Acts 19. 2. Eternity depends upon't: Your Choice of Heaven or Hell; your being Children of God, or of the Devil; your being sav'd or damn'd for ever: All This, (and what is *All*, if *This* be not?) All this depends upon the Answer to this necessary Question. *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, says St. Paul, they are the Children of God,* Rom. 8. 16. Compute your Actions, Words and Thoughts, from Morning to Night, from Day to Day: Does the Spirit of God direct and lead you? Or the Spirit of this World? If the Spirit of God, you are the Children of God: If not, hear what the Apostle says, *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his,* Rom. 8. 9. He is not a Brother of Christ, he is not an adoptive Son of his eternal Father; he has a Father in Hell, but none in Heaven.

§. 4. *Motives of Love.* 39

ven. Our Saviour plainly says, *If God were your Father, you would love me above all things, John 8. 24.* But because you do not, *you are of your Father, the Devil, ver. 44.*

Let those who above all things love the World, consider this, and tremble. Let them not gaze in vain, upon our Saviour ascending to his Father: Let them be assur'd his Father is not theirs; and that, as certainly as he ascended to his Father in Heaven, they shall in time (unless they Teriously repent) descend to theirs in Hell.

This was the Reason, why our Saviour told the Jews, *Whether I go, you cannot come, John 8. 21.* As if he should say, I go to my Father; if he were your Father also, then you might bear me Company: But, since you have receiv'd the Spirit of this World, 1 Cor. 2. 12 as long as you are govern'd by the Spirit of another Father, you may in due time follow him to Hell; but 'tis impossible (without sincere Repentance) you should ever follow me to Heaven: *Whither I go, you cannot come.* The Jews amaz'd to hear it, knew not what he meant. He told them the Reason: *I am from above, says he, I am not of this World, John 8. 23.* The Spirit which

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governs all my Actions, is from above ; 'tis not the Spirit of this World ; 'tis the Spirit of my Father, therefore I go to him. But on the other side, *You are of this World*, Ibid. You are led by the Spirit of this World ; and therefore, *Whither I go, you cannot come.*

Let us not flatter and deceive ourselves with vain Appearances of superficial Piety, which float upon the Surface of our Souls ; but sound the very Bottom of our Hearts, and be assur'd, that if we find them chiefly fix'd upon this World, or any Creature in it ; we may stand *gazing* with the Men of *Galilee*, we may contemplate and admire the Ascension of our Saviour, but all in vain ; all this will be no Comfort to us : Whither he goes, we cannot follow him. We cannot ascend, unless we first receive the Holy Ghost ; nor can we receive him, unless we first prepare for his Reception.

SECT. V.

That we ought to prepare our Hearts for this great Grace.

WHEN our Saviour was upon the point of leaving his Apostles, after he had been *Forty Days* discoursing with them concerning the Kingdom of God :

§. 5. *Motives of Love.* 41

God: The last and most important thing he recommended to their Care, was, that they should prepare themselves for the receiving of the Holy Ghost: *He commanded them, that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the Promise of the Father, Acts 1. 4.*

Prepare your Hearts, says the Prophet; *Prepare your Hearts to God, and serve Him only, and He will deliver you, 1 Sam. 7. 3.* Prepare your Hearts to entertain the Holy Ghost, or else you never will receive him. Prepare Materials for the Temple of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 6. 19. His Temple is not to be built and finish'd in a Day: We must have time to carry on the Work, and more than ordinary Preparations must be made: *With all my Might,* says the Royal Prophet, *I have prepar'd for the House of my God;* because, says he, *the Work is great, and the Palace is not for Man, but God, 1 Chron. 29. 1, 2.*

Our Heart has been profan'd with Idols: Our Ambition, Avarice, and Lust have had their several *Altars* in it; and from Time to Time, according as occasion serv'd, have offer'd *Sacrifice* to Honours, Riches, Pleasures. Such a Temple, so profan'd, must be demolish'd, and a New one built upon the Ruins of
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42 *Motives of Love.* §. 5.

of it. *Make your selves a new Heart, and a new Spirit,* says the Prophet, *Ezek. 18. 31.* Although it be God's *Work*, it is not only *His*, but also *Ours*. As much as lies in us, we must co-operate and labour with him: And the more difficult it is, the more industriously we must endeavour to affect it. *With all our Might*, 1 Chron. 29 2. with all our Industry and Diligence, we must prepare our Heart, that it may be a Temple of the Holy Ghost.

O that we had but Wings like a Dove, (the Wings of that Dove, which once descended visibly upon our Saviour.) *then should we fly away, and be at rest*, Psal. 55. 6. Our Hearts should fly away from all things in this World; and be at rest in Heaven. If once the Love of God enflame our Hearts, with ardent and continual Desires of being happy with him, we shall find, that these Desires are Wings by which our Hearts aspire and mount to Heaven. But, if the Love of any thing in this World bind us to the Earth, we then shall find, that our Celestial Desires are clogg'd with Earthly Passions; and although we now and then, with a faint Sigh, look up to Heaven, yet our stronger Inclinations will always bear us down. He who is wholly disengag'd
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§. 5. *Motives of Love.* 43

from all the Charms of a deluding World, he only is at liberty. *St. Austin* says, *The Wings of his Soul are free*; but if his Heart be any way *ensnar'd* with any other Love, *He then has Bird-lime in his Wings*; he cannot fly away, and be at Rest.

The Apostles themselves were not prepar'd for the receiving of the Holy Ghost, as long as they were satisfied with being *Happy* in our Saviour's Company on Earth. If any Satisfaction here below, could innocently challenge so much place in their Affections, surely Innocence it self descending down from Heaven, had the best and clearest Title to their Love. And yet, as long as they were of *St. Peter's* Mind, and thought with themselves, *'Tis good for us to be here*, *Matth. 17. 4.* *'tis good to make our Tabernacles here*; so long we find they were not fit for the Reception of the Holy Ghost. *I tell you the Truth*, says our Saviour, *'Tis expedient for you that I go away*. *John 16. 7.* because you love me with so little Resignation, and are so unwilling that I leave you; therefore *'tis expedient for you*, that I now ascend to raise your Hearts above the World, and carry them to Heaven with me. *If I go not away*, your Love will creep upon the Earth, the Spirit of the World will still
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44 *Motives of Love.* §. 5.

possess your Hearts, the Spirit of God will find no Habitation there, *ver. 7. The Comforter will not come: But if I depart, if I (whom you so dearly love) ascend, your Minds and Hearts will follow me to Heaven, they will be rais'd above the Reach of all things in this World, the Spirit of the World will have no dwelling there; you then will be prepar'd for the Receiving of the Holy Ghost; and when you are so, I will send Him to you, ver. 7.*

When the Holy Ghost came, he fill'd all the House where they were sitting, Acts 2.

2. Where-ever he comes, -he fills the House, he takes it all to himself: And 'tis no wonder, being Infinite, he takes up so much room. As God would cease to be Immense, if there were any corner of the World in which he is not present; so the Holy Ghost would cease to be our Infinite and Sovereign Good, if any corner of our Heart have any thing lodg'd in it, that excludes him. When once we have receiv'd the Holy Ghost, our Heart is the Kingdom of God. He is the Absolute and Only Monarch that commands it, he cannot alienate the least part of his Title to the Government; he cannot any way admit of a Companion in his Throne. Our Heart

§. 5. *Motives of Love.* 45

is the Throne of the Most High : And, if we remember what became of *Lucifer*, I hope it will suffice to make us sensible, how dangerous a thing it is, to place a Creature in the Throne of God, and make it *like the Highest*, Isa. 14. 14.

St. *Austin* wondring at the overflowing Measure of God's Holy Spirit in the Apostles Hearts, observes, that the Reason why they were so full of God, was because they were so empty of his Creatures : They were very full, says he, because they were very empty ; because they were so empty of the Spirit of this World, therefore they were so full of the Spirit of God.

O that our Hearts were empty ; O that they were purg'd and cleans'd like theirs, from all inordinate Affection to this World ; we then should be prepar'd like them, and ready to receive the Fulness of the Holy Ghost. 'Tis a great Work, and will require some time ; Why are we then so slow in undertaking it ? *Why do we stand gazing ?* Acts 1. 11. we gaze, we lift our Eyes to Heaven, but yet we stand ; our Feet are fix'd upon the Earth. We prefer *Heaven* before *Hell*, of the two we had rather be there ; but of the three, (if it were possible) we had rather be always here.

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46 *Motives of Love.* §. 5.

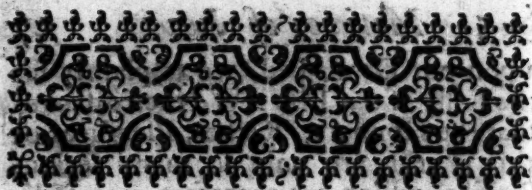
How long will you love Vanity? says the Psalmist, Psal. 4. 2. *This World is nothing else but Vanity: How long will you love it?* 'Tis *Vanity and Vexation of Spirit*, Eccles. 4. 16. *How long will you delight in it?* It flies before you *like a Shadow*, Ch. 6. 12. *How long will you run after it?* Alas! 'tis but a *Shadow* if you overtake it. *The World passes away*, 1 John 4. 17. 'Tis an unkind ill-natur'd World, which passes by us with a flattering Smile, and will not stay a moment with us. If it had ever been a true and faithful Friend to any Man, we should have some Pretence to justify our Expectation of its being kind: But, since we know, it never was so to its greatest Favourites, we may be sure, it never will be so to us. The time will come, when we shall plainly see (altho' perhaps too late,) that *All is Vanity*; and we shall love no more what we are now so fond of. The Love of all those Trifles, which our Infancy was once much pleas'd withal, is now forgot; and we so much contemn those childish Entertainments, that unless we saw the same in other Children, we should scarce believe, we ever lov'd them. As when we advance in Years, we see the folly of our Childhood; so

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§. 5. *Motives of Love.* 47

upon our Death-bed, we as plainly see the Folly of our Life: We then discover that the Honours, Riches, Pleasures of this World, are only so many serious Trifles, which are therefore more ridiculous, because more serious. When once the Period of our Time approaches: When we are upon the Borders of Eternity: When we are, as it were, betwixt two Worlds, the End of this, and the Beginning of the next, which never will have end: Then it is, that all our Joys begin to vanish out of sight; they are the same to us, as if they never had been present: Then it is, that all our Miseries are every one in view, such Miseries as never can be past, but will for all Eternity, be always present: When once that Hour comes, we shall be wise enough to undervalue and contemn what we so dearly love: But then, I fear, we shall be Wise too late: Our useless Wisdom will not rise in Judgment for us, but against us. O let us now endeavour to be Wise, and disengage our Hearts from all inordinate Affection to this World; that we may be prepar'd for the receiving of this Grace, which is the best and surest Pledge of the Eternal Glory, which we hope for in the World to come.

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MOTIVES OF FEAR.

SECT. I.

*How much it imports us, to remember the
Day of Judgment.*

WHEN the Disciples ask'd
our Saviour, What would
be the Sign of his Coming,
and of the End of the World,
Matth. 24. 3. Our Saviour answer'd,
That the Day and Hour, ver. 36. were
not to be known before-hand; that his
Coming, ver. 27. would be like a Flash of
Lightning, when they least expected him.
Therefore, says he, v. 44. *be ready; for in
such an Hour as you think not, the Son of
Man will come. Heaven and Earth shall
pass away, but my Words shall not pass a-
way,*

§. I. *Motives of Fear.* 49

way, ver. 35. The World shall have an End. The Son of Man shall come to Judge the World. The Hour of his Coming shall surprize us, when we *think* not of it. If we knew before-hand, we should certainly *prepare*. And we have much more Reason, since we do not know it.

But, alas! our Saviour Jesus Christ himself has prophecy'd, ver. 38. that *As in the Days that were before the Flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in Marriage, till the Day that Noah enter'd the Ark, ver. 39. and knew not, till the Flood came and took them all away: So also, shall be the Coming of the Son of Man.* He told us how it would be, and every Day we see how true it is. We mind nothing but eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in Marriage: We seek for nothing but Diver^sion, Sport, and Pastime: We now Rejoice; but then, when the World ends, our Joys will end with it; then we shall Grieve, and not only then, but for ever. Then all the Tribes of the Earth shall mourn, Mat 24. 30.

Then shall all mourn. Not *All* the Just; not *All* God's Friends; not *All* devout and pious Christians, who not only in their Baptism, but also during Life, renounc'd the Vanities and Pleasures of

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50 *Motives of Fear.* §. I.

this World: *All these will have just reason to abound with Joy, at the Approach of their so long desir'd, and everlasting Happiness: They sow'd with Tears, but now shall reap with Joy, Psal. 126. 5.*

All the Tribes of the Earth: All those whose Hearts were always fix'd upon the *Earth*; upon the Honours, Riches, Pleasures of the *Earth*; *They shall all mourn, and not without sufficient Reason:* For, 1. They shall see the fatal *End* of all their transitory *Happiness*. 2. They shall see the sad *Beginning* of their everlasting *Misery*.

S E C T. II.

That our Last Day is the fatal End of all our Transitory Happiness.

AS, on the one side, Nothing can be truly *Little*, which is Infinite; so on the other, Nothing can be truly *Great*, which has an End. Or *God is Great*, says the Prophet, *Baruch 3. 25. and has no End.* As if he had a mind to let us understand, that God himself, with all his other Attributes, would be but *little*, if he had *one*: That All this World is therefore inconsiderable: And that the Next is therefore to be valued above all things, because it is a World *without end.*

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§. 2. *Motives of Fear.* 51

This is the common Misery attending all our Happiness. All that is *past*, is Nothing: All that we enjoy at *present*, is but one poor Moment: All that is *to come*, is every Moment less and less, approaching nigher to the final period of its future Being, which is *Nothing*.

The very Thoughts of this, is so afflicting, that it puts a stop to all our Joys, and makes us miserable in the full Career of our Felicity: We need no more, to damp our Spirits in the midst of our Enjoyments, than the Importunity of this unwelcome Thought; *All this will shortly have an End*. The Paradise of our first Parents would have been to them no Paradise at all, had they foreseen the *End* of it. And when God pleas'd to interdict the eating of the fatal Fruit, he seem'd to judge, that nothing could be more effectual to contain them in their Duty, than to let them know, that *Death* should put an *End* to *All*, if ever they presum'd to eat of it. As it was then their chief and only Comfort, to survey the vast extent and great variety of their Delights, and at the same time confidently say, *All this is ours for ever*, if we please. So it had been impossible for any Artifice of the malicious Serpent, to surprise them, or prevail upon them, if he had

not flatter'd them with some assurance, that they should not *Die*; but still be *truly* happy, that is, happy *without End*.

The Devil does not now pretend to face us down, *We shall not die*: He knows that so notorious a Cheat, would never pass upon us. But yet, for fear least we should undervalue all the vain Allurements of a miserable World, he whispers in our Ear, we shall not die *so soon*: He has not the Impudence to tell us, that the World will *never* end, but that it will not end *so soon* as we imagine: *Thou hast many Goods*, says the *Rich Man* in the Gospel, *laid up for many Years*, Luke 12. 19.

This is in short the Sum of our Felicity on Earth. The happiest Man that ever liv'd, could say no more than this. He could not say, that he had *All* which he desir'd; he could not but observe, by sad Experience, that he was still unsatisfied, and that his small Possessions were nothing to his great Desires. Nor could he say, that what he had, would *always* be his own: He could not but be well acquainted with the Truth of what *Man* is; he daily *dies*; he every Moment is upon his Journey to the Grave: *He wastes away, gives up the Ghost, and where is he?* Job 14. 10. However, he might say, to comfort his insatiable Soul: Although thou hast

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hast not *All* that thou can'st wish for, *Thou hast many Goods*; and tho' thou can'st not possibly enjoy them *always*, yet they are *laid up for many Years*; thy Palace is magnificent, thy Entertainment splendid, thy Attendance numerous, thy Gardens are a Paradise of pleasure and delight, thy Honour equal to thy Fortune, and thy Power equal to both; the World admires thee, courts thee, and almost adores thee; is not this enough? *Thou hast many Goods.* And why should any melancholy Apprehensions seize thy Spirits, and disturb thy Mind with fearful Thoughts of losing what thou hast? There is no danger, whilst thou liv'st, and thou art in the flower of thy Age, just ripe for pleasure, healthy, vigorous, and like to live these *many Years*: And, what hast thou to do, but *take thy Ease, eat, drink, and be as merry*, Luke 12. 19. as if thou wert to live for ever?

Behold, the best that we can make of the most happy State we hope for here. We dare not look before us, lest we see the end of all our Joys: We blindly doat upon these Darlings of our Passion, and endeavour to forget the Misery of their Mortality and ours. We are not able to support a serious Thought of our perpetual Decay; and though we love

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our selves above all things, yet we hate the very Sight of our Condition; we cannot endure to look into our selves; and as an idle Solitude is ever troublesome, because we love no Company so little as our own; so the great Reason, why the Company of any other Person is so pleasing, is, because it hinders us from thinking of our selves.

The greatest and most happy Man, whose Heart is fix'd upon this World, would soon be Melancholy, if he had but leisure to reflect, that every Moment leads him to the period of his Happiness. The doleful Prospect of a future Separation is so terrible, that he endeavours all he can, to think of nothing farther than the present. All the busy Agitation of his Mind, the Exercises of his Body, and the Pastimes of his Conversation, are delightful to him, chiefly upon this Account; because they are *Diversions*; that is, because they fix his Mind upon the present Moment, and divert him from the melancholy Thought, that *all his Happiness must have an End.*

If the bare Thought of our approaching Period be so doleful. even at a distance, where Uncertainty gives room to make the most we can of our Felicity; if, I say, the very Thought of it be so

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so afflicting, what will the Presence of it be, when with our own Eyes we shall see that fatal End, which now we are so much afraid to think of? We now are merry and rejoice, because we banish from us the uneasy Apprehension: But then, all those who will be sad Spectators of this doleful Scene, will be no longer able to divert themselves from thinking of the Misery they see before them. *Then all the Tribes of the Earth shall mourn,* Matth. 24. 30.

To close the Eyes of any dying Friend we dearly love, is apt to move our Tears; altho' our other Friends, who yet survive, are still a Comfort to us. But when their dearest Friend, the World it self, begins to die; when all their Comfort, all at once forsakes them; when the Sun and Moon grows dark, and the expiring World begins to close its Eyes: *Then they shall all mourn.*

When once that dismal Day is come, which the Prophet Zephaniah calls the *Great Day of the Lord, a Day of Calamity and Misery, a Day of Darkness, a Day of Tribulation and Distress,* Chap. 1. 13. When Cataracts of Fire shall shower down upon their Heads, as if the Stars themselves fell from the Firmament: When in the last Convulsions of its mortal A-

gony, the Earth trembles, and Hell it self lies gaping under their Feet: Then they shall plainly see the Meaning of that Vision in the *Revelations*, Chap. 10. 5, 6. which represents an Angel *standing* with one Foot upon the raging Sea, another on the trembling Land, *lifting his Hand to Heaven, and swearing by him that lives for ever; Time shall be no more.*

Poor miserable Wretches! There was once a Time, when Honours, Dignities and Titles, recommended them to the admiring World, whose Eyes were dazzled with the Glory of their Greatness: They were follow'd, waited on, and celebrated in their Generation: But, *now*, alas! They shall be so *No more.* There was a Time, when they abounded in the over-flowing Measure of their Wealth; their Palaces were sumptuous, and all things suitable to the aspiring Height of their Ambition: But now, *No more*: Their great Manificence is buried in the Ruins of the World; their Gold and Silver melted down into the Earth, from whence it came; and all their Pride lies levell'd with the common Dust, to which all Things return. There was a Time, when all the sinful Pleasures of the World attended them; when they deny'd their Passions nothing

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thing that they ask'd, when they had full Command of *All* that they desir'd, and rather cloy'd, than satisfy'd their brutal Appetites: But now, *No more*. Their Honour, Riches, Pleasures, All are at an End: Their *Time* is at an End: Their *Time shall be no more*.

When, as it happens frequently amongst the various Accidents of Human Life, we are depriv'd of some particular Enjoyment which we passionately love; tho' we lament and grieve, yet we have still some Comfort left: 'Tis not a total Deprivation of *All* that we enjoy: The Damage is supported by some other Pleasures and Conveniencies. If one Friend die, our other Friends survive. If one forsake us, we may find another faithful to us. Or, if they all abandon us yet our Misfortune is not universal: He have always something left, which we can think upon without Affliction, and repose our wearied Thoughts. He that is dangerously sick of one or two Diseases, is not at the same Time sick of all the rest. Whatever his Condition is, he always has some Hopes of being better: And although these Hopes are very little, they are still some little Comfort to a Man in Misery. But, when this dread-

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ful Day is come, which puts an end to Time, it puts an end to *All* their hopes; *All* that they ever lov'd, or now desire, abandons them; their Inclinations are more lively than they ever were, and all are disappointed. *Then All the Tribes of the Earth shall mourn*, to see the fatal End of *All* their transitory Happiness. But, alas! this is not All: They shall have much more reason to lament and grieve, when at the same time they behold the sad Beginning of their *Everlasting Misery*.

S E C T. III.

That our Last Day is the sad Beginning of our Everlasting Misery.

WE have seen the dreadful Symptoms of an Agonizing World; the terrible Convulsions of expiring Nature, and the final End of *All* that Sinners love with so much Passion: An End of all Ambition, Avarice, and Pleasure; an End of all their Honours, Riches, and Amours; an End of polittick Designs, of ancient Families, of nuptial Joys; an End of idle Conversations, Balls and Plays; an End of Beauty, Wit, and Courage; an End of all their Feasting, Drinking, and Diverting; an End of all their Mirth, Delight, and Pastime: And, which of all things

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is most terrible to a disparting Soul, an End of Sin, but not an End of the Sinner; an End of Pleasure, but not an End of Pain; an End of Time, but not an End of their Eternity, which will Eternally begin, and never have an End. After Hundreds, Thousands, Millions, not of Years, but Ages; if we may suppose that Heaven and Earth, with all that they contain, were chang'd into numeral Figures; at the Foot of the Account, whatever it amount to, you may find it written, *here Eternity begins*. Moreover, if you multiply this Number by it self, and by the same Rule, multiply the Product of it, all is nothing to Eternity; where ever this innumerable Number Ends, *Eternity begins*.

If *all* be nothing to Eternity, what will the inconsiderable number of those Years which Sinners prodigally spend in Sin? What will it then appear to be? Will it not seem incomparably less than Nothing? And will not Sinners then have too much reason to lament, that for so short a Moment, so much less than Nothing, they have forfeited the Eternal Joys of Heaven, and incurr'd the everlasting Pains of Hell? *What is a Man advantag'd*, says our Saviour, Luke 9. 25. *if he gain the whole World and lose him*.

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himself? Alas! Poor Souls, what Comfort is it, to have gain'd the World, and lost your selves? To have lost all Happiness, and gain'd (if I may call it Gain) all Misery, and *all* for *Nothing*?

What Pains, and by what Means they are to suffer, is a question fitter for our Curiosity than our Edification. 'Tis enough, to know as much of Hell, as the Apostle tells us of Heaven, 1 Cor. 2. 9. *Neither the Eye has seen, nor the Ear heard, nor has it entred into the Heart of any Man,* what unspeakable Pains and Torments the Almighty has prepar'd in the next Life, for those who have in *this* offended him. 'Tis enough, that God is certainly as *Just* as he is *God*, and therefore infinitely Just. 'Tis enough that the *Enormity* of Sin, which he so patiently endures, is aggravated by the Greatness of his Majesty and therefore infinitely *Infinite*. It follows evidently

hence, that All (a) which
(a) *All the most effectual and most proper Means.* God's great Wisdom can invent All that his Justice (b) can exact, and All that his Omnipotence (c) can put in execution, will be All employ'd to punish those

(b) *By the Eternal Rule of his Decree.*
(c) *According to the rigour of the Sentence.*

who

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who have offended him. It follows also, that it is as much impossible for any Man to comprehend the great Excess of those Eternal Pains, as 'tis to understand God's Wisdom, Justice, and Omnipotence; all which are infinitely rais'd above the reach of human Reason. However, we may easily conjecture something, by considering God's Justice in this World, and judging thence, what it may be hereafter.

If the Just themselves are so severely punish'd in this World, if it be true, as the *Psalmist* says, *Psal. 34. 19. Many are the Afflictions of the Righteous*; if even God's Friends who are so faithful to him, undergo such Punishments for little failings in their Duty, what will become of his Enemies, who forfeit all their Title to his Friendship, by their grievous Sins?

If in the Days of overflowing Mercy, which appear'd so eminently above all his Works, he gave such signal Instances of his evenging Anger; if even when his Pity (in a manner) held his Hands, the fury of his Wrath broke loose, and with an universal Deluge laid the World so deep in Water, that amongst so many Millions, not a single Sinner could escape: What will become of miserable Sinners at the Day of Judgment, when
the

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the end of Time shall put an end to all his Goodness, all his Kindness, all his Mercy, and begin the Triumph of Eternal Justice? When our God will be ~~no~~ no longer Good, no longer Kind, no longer Merciful, but only Just; Eternally and infinitely Just.

Our Saviour Jesus will not then appear as the Physician (a)

(a) 'Tis too late to be Cur'd, or Redeem'd. and Redeemer of our Souls, but only as the Judge of all our Actions: And even to his Friends

(b) As Judge he appoints them that Place. (b) at his right Hand, He will not shew himself in any other Quality: The very Sentence of their Happiness will be an Act

(c) Not an Act of Pardon. of Justice only, (c) not of Mercy: Our Lord, says the Apostle, at that Day, will be a Righteous Judge. 'Tis

true, 'twas nothing but the merciful Assistance of his Grace, which heretofore enabled them to fight, and finish well their Course; but now in the Rewarding

(d) No longer inclin'd to Pardon. of his Friends according to his Promise. (d) He's no longer Merciful, if we believe St. Paul, but only Righteous and Just.

If

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If *at that Day* he would be Merciful to any, he would surely be so to his Friends : And since the best and Faithfullest of all his Servants, find no Mercy (a) at their Tryal, can his Enemies expect it ? 'Tis call'd the Day of *Judgment* to distinguish it from all these other Days of Mercy : And, if in *these* he shower'd down Fire from Heaven, 'tis no wonder, if in *those* the Stars themselves will seem to fall : If *Sodom* and *Gomorrab* were consum'd, 'tis easie to believe, that then the Earth with all of it be laid in Ashes. But, alas ! this Universal Deluge of devouring Fire, together with the Darkness of the Sun and Moon, the roarings of the Sea, and howlings of the Wind and Air ; All this is but a Prelude to the Misery of Sinners : This is only the *Beginning of their Sorrows*, Matth. 24. 8. This is nothing but their Summons to appear before the Bar : And, 'tis the dreadful Apprehension of their Judgment and Damnation, which torments them with an agonizing Fear.

There was a Time when Life was sweet ; but now they hate it. There was once a Time, when the despair of Living was their greatest Pain ; but now

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now the Scene is chang'd, and the despair of dying is incomparably more tormenting. *In those Days*, says the beloved Disciple, Rev. 9. 6. *Men shall seek Death, and shall not find it ; They shall desire to Die, and Death shall fly from them.* There was a Time, when Sinners laugh'd at all the Fears and Apprehensions of this Day ; but now the *Time of laughing*, Eccl. 3. 4. will be past ; nor will it be, as Solomon calls it a *Time to mourn* : it will not be a Time, but an *Eternity* to mourn.

Then all the Tribes of the Earth shall mourn. Not only those, who whilst they liv'd, were thought to carry visibly the Mark of Reprobation in their Foreheads ; but also, such as liv'd great Saints in the esteem of Men, and died great Sinners in the sight of God ; shall then desire to die again, and seek for an *Eternal Death, and shall not find it.* Then shall their conceal'd Abominations, all their shameful Actions, all their secret Works of Darkness, come to light. Then *nothing shall be covered*, nothing so industriously hid, but what shall be reveal'd, Matth. 10. 26. to all the World. Nor only those who took such care to hide their Sins from others, but even those who formerly were us'd to hide them from themselves, shall clearly see the Malice.

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Malice of their palliated Crimes: *Then they shall see, and then they shall mourn.* Matth. 24. 30.

We now are willing to live peaceably and quietly within our selves; we do not much delight in the remorse of a guilty Mind; and therefore we contrive some kind of Conscience for every thing we do. We are uneasy at the thought of everlasting Pains; and therefore, if we ever take our selves to task, we rake together all we can, to make a favourable judgement of our State. As the Examen rather is design'd to please our selves, then God, 'tis generally very superficial. We look upon our Actions all in gross, without enquiring much into the drift and chief design of them. We look upon the outward shew; The approbation and esteem of Men; The Example of some, who pass for good and virtuous, and yet have often done the same as we do: Our being free (as we suppose) from many Faults, which we observe not in our selves; our great abhorrence of some certain Sins, which we observe in others: Our being punctually and religiously precise in some small Matters, some exterior Mortifications, some particular Devotions which we take a fancy to: And thus we frame a
false.

false Idea of the miserable State we shall be found in, when we come before the Bar. We *now* are proud, and willing to excuse our selves: But *then* the Testimony of our clearer sighted Conscience, will confound and humble us. Our Passions blind us *now*; we see not what we truly are: But *then* the Sun of Justice will arise, and scatter all the darkness which conceals us from our selves. The piercing Rays, the All-discovering Beams of *Truth* will break like Lightning through the Clouds of our affected Ignorance, when once the *Son of Man* appears to judge the World.

If there be any possibility of cheating his All-seeing Wisdom; of calling back the Time of his Indulgent Mercy, or escaping from the hands of his Almighty Power: Were there any possibility of this, or were there any Friend from whom the Guilty might expect the least assistance; it would be some little Comfort.

They had *once* a true and faithful Friend who dearly lov'd them; came from Heaven to instruct them, and conduct them thither; liv'd a painful and laborious Life amongst them; and although neglected, scorn'd, and persecuted by them, yet continued constant
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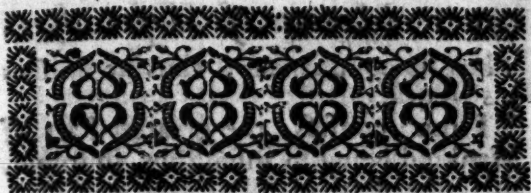
in his Love, and to redeem them, paid their Ransom with the price of his own Blood. But now their best and only *Friend* becomes their greatest Enemy. He lov'd them once : But Love so long neglected, and so *much* abus'd, is now quite chang'd into a mortal and eternal Hatred. He invited all of them to come to *Him*, whenever they had need of his Assistance, *Matth. 11. 28. Come to me all you that labour* : But now, alas ! it is too late to come : His Patience now is spent ; and in the Fury of his everlasting Indignation, he for ever banishes them from him, *Matth. 25. 41. Go from me ye accursed. Go Ambitious Souls, and leave your honourable Titles all behind you ; go, and seek the best Preferment you can find, amongst the Devils and his Angels ; Ibid. ver. 41. Go, Insatiable Misers ; go and take possession of that Misery which you have purchas'd with the loss of your beloved Treasure : Go, Voluptuous Wretches ; you, who formerly have wish'd your Flames might ever burn : Go now, and burn for ever, in the everlasting Flames of Hell.*

Behold, the dreadful Sentence we must All expect, unless we follow his Advice, who then will be our Judge,
Luke.

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Luke 21. 36. *Watch therefore, says he, and Pray always; that you may then be accounted worthy to escape; and stand before the Son of Man.* Alas! Our dear Redeemer takes no pleasure in Condemning us. No Man, says St. Austin, who designs to strike us, bids us have a Care. Our Saviour often warns us, often calls upon us, often bids us have a Care. St. Paul exhorts us in his Name, Rom. 13. 11. *'Tis now the Hour for us to rise from sleep: 'Tis now the Hour to go with Tears of true Repentance to the Throne of Grace; that then we may appear with Confidence and Joy before the great Tribunal of his Justice: 'Tis now the Hour to hearken to him, Matth. 11. 28. Come to me all you that labour; that then we may be sure to hear him call us to him, Matth. 25. 34. Come ye blessed; Come, and reap the Fruit of all your Labours; Come, and take possession of those Everlasting Joys, which were prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. Amen.*

MOTIVES



MOTIVES OF HOPE.

SECT. I.

How unreasonable a Thing it is for any Sinner to Despair.

THE greatest Mystery of Christian Morality, consists in the equal ballancing of *Hope* and *Fear*, betwixt God's *Mercy* and his *Justice*; that we may neither be secure in Sin, because he is so Merciful; nor yet Despond, because he is so Just. *Presumption* and *Despair* are the two Rocks, twixt which all Christians ought to steer an even Course; and so avoid the One, as not to dash upon the Other. 'Tis perhaps the greatest Secret of the Devil's Art. He first inclines us to *Presume*; and we no sooner see the Danger of it, but he tempts us to *Despair*.
Thus

Thus he commences; thus he finishes his Work.

I must confess, the greatest Part of Mankind being so insensible, so stupid, so immerst in wordly Cares and Pleasures, is enough to justify the pious Zeal of those who frequently proclaim the Menaces of an offended Majesty, and with the formidable Noise of Hell, Damnation, and everlasting Torments, labour to awake and rouse them from the Lethargy of Sin. But, when they are awake, and looking round about them, take a Prospect of their miserable State; when every horrid Crime appears in its own dreadful Shape; when multitudes of past Offences croud into their Minds, and overwhelm their heavy Thoughts with a despairing Expectation of no less than everlasting Misery: Alas! poor Souls, it is not now a seasonable Time to magnify the Motives of their Fear. If ever Comfort and Encouragement were necessary to allay the Pains and Anguishes of a despairing Soul: Now is the Time. What shall we say? Tell them, they need not fear? Oh no! The malice of their grievous Sins is infinite; the Danger of their lamentable State is greater than they can imagine: Let but their Hope be equal to their Fear, they can-

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cannot fear too much. How then shall we encourage their expiring Hope? I'll tell you how?

If God were only *Just*, and were not also *Powerful* and *Merciful*, a Sinner then might lawfully Despair: But when God's *Power* and *Mercy* both concur to comfort the desponding Heart of an afflicted Penitent, What can he wish for more? There are but two Conditions requisite to qualify the Person, upon whose Assistance we depend, that we may safely Hope, and with a loving Confidence assure ourselves of his Protection. The first is, that he *can* relieve us, if he will: The second, that he *will* relieve us, if we please. *Will*, without Power, signifies but little: Power, without Will, signifies much less: But, when they *both* meet in the Person of a *Friend*, to whom we always have a free Access; who certainly *can* help us, if he will; and no less certainly will help us, if we please: Then, let our *present* Misery be never so great, let the approaching Danger of our *future* Ruin every Day seem greater, we may with trembling Hearts expect the helping Hand which *can* and *will* deliver us; but all our Fear can never exclude our Hope; it cannot rob us of that Comfort, Satisfaction, and Joy,

Joy, with so much Confidence in such a *Friend* inspires.

If when a Sinner struggles with his Chains, endeavours to break loose; and more he struggles, more he finds himself engag'd; (which the All-seeing Wisdom frequently permits, to humble a proud Soul:) If then these two great Truths were settl'd in his Mind, to wit, that God can free him, if he *will*, and that he *will* not fail to free him, if he please: O! with what Pleasure would he relish the Assurance of this loving Confidence! With how much transport of a joyful Mind, would he recite those Words of St. Paul, 1 Tim. i. 12. *I know in whom I have believ'd; I know in whom I put my Trust; I know, and am persuaded, He is able to deliver me. I am assur'd, he is not only Powerful but Merciful; and therefore, I am certain, he both can and will assist me.*

S E C T. II.

That God can help us if he will.

Divinity and boundless Power, are so much the same, that no Man can deny the one, and own the other. There is no Truth so evident, in which the World so universally agrees, as God's Omnipotence. Every body knows, that
No.

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Nothing is Impossible to God. 'Tis one of the first Truths which a Philosopher demonstrates, or a Christian believes. *Almighty* is his Name, the Name we know him by, the Name he Answers to whenever we call upon Him.

What need I then Discourse upon a Truth, which every body knows? The Reason is, Because altho' we *know* it well enough, We very seldom, hardly ever, *think* of it.

We all *know*, Nothing is impossible to God : and that the lamentable State of a poor Sinner cannot be so desperate, but that He can retrieve him. And yet how little do we think of this, when we are tempted to despair? Do we not then behave our selves as if we doubted of it? I am afraid, that at the best we pray like him, of whom St. *Mark* makes mention, *Chap. 9. 22.* Lord if *Thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.* I fear we often are Incredulous, and have just reason to repeat with *Tears* his humble Prayer, *ver. 23.* Lord, *I believe, help thou my unbelief.*

If *David*, that great Saint, *1. Sam. 13. 14.* according to God's Heart, who lo king back to take a view of all his past Iniquities, saw at a distance only some few Sins, which he had long since
D wash'd

wash'd away with Penitential Tears; if He could scarce support the terror of that melancholy Prospect, as he says himself, *Psal.* 38, 3, 4, 6, 10. and *all day long went mourning* for his Sins; if his Heart panted, and his Strength fail'd him; if He had no rest, because he was *overhead in his Iniquities*, which like a heavy burden were too heavy for him; If He, I say, were thus perplex'd with Fear, and almost ready to Despair of his Salvation; Have not I just cause to apprehend much more the Danger of such Doubts in greater Sinners, who are almost surfeited with Sin, before they seriously begin to look behind them, and compute terrible Arrears of all their past Offences?

I must confess, the Difficulties which occur in the Conversion of a Sinner, are insuperable, if compar'd to the weak Strength of our corrupted Nature; and if the possibility of Working our Salvation be consider'd, only with regard to Humane Frailty, there appears no hope of compassing so great a Work. Such is the Ignorance and Blindness of our Understanding; such is the Malice and Perverseness of our Will; our Inclinations are so prone to liberty; and the Restraint of our unreasonable Humours is so sensibly

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sensibly uneasy to us, that a thorough Reformation of our Lives is far above our single Strength. Without the Grace of God, we neither have the Wisdom to contrive it, nor the Courage to begin it, nor the Power to perform it.

But yet this Darkness of our *Reason*, though we cannot of our selves dissipate it, may be dissipated by a lively Faith in Him, *who enlightens every Man that comes into the World*, John 1. 9. This depravation and Corruption of our *Will*, (altho' it be to us alone impossible) may, by the sweet and forcible impulses of a powerful Grace, be chang'd and rectified: This obstinate Rebellion of our Appetite against the Rule of Reason, and the Precepts of a Christian Life, (though we have often found our selves unable to reduce it to the terms of just Obedience,) may easily be conquer'd by Omnipotence.

If Sin have so much blinded us, that we can hardly see our Danger: If the Noise of Worldly Vanities have made us almost deaf to all good Counsel: If the Habit of our Sins have lam'd us, so that we can scarcely move a foot towards Heaven: If we are *blind, deaf, lame*, nay, even *dead* to God, and all that's good, (no Person can be in a

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worse condition then this :) All this is nothing to the *powerful* Hand of God : Such Miracles as these were his familiar Exercise on Earth, *Matth. 11. 5. The Blind see, the Deaf hear, the Lame walk, the Dead are rais'd to Life.* All this our God can easily perform, in-favour of us, whensoever He pleases.

Lord, if thou wilt, says the Leprous Man, thou can'st make me clean, Matth. 8. 2. Let the Diseases of a sinful Soul be ever so inveterate, so deeply rooted in the Heart, He clearly and distinctly comprehends the nature of them all : He knows exactly the proportion and virtue of his Remedies, and all of them obey the Word of his Command, *Matth. 8. 3. I will, says he, Be thou cleansed ;* (when once God says the Word, the Work is done,) *immediately his Leprosie was cleans'd.*

Create in me, O my God, Create in me a clean Heart, Psal. 50. I ask not any thing but what is easie to Thee. Alas ! it is to me impossible : But Thou, my God, canst do it with more ease than I can ask it. Behold my Misery with Pity and Compassion. Behold me indigent and naked, cloath'd with nothing but the horrid Scurf of my Uncleanneſs. Behold me *Blind, Deaf, Lame ;* and almost

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most *dead* with a contagious Leprosie of Sin, which covers me from head to foot, and has not left a sound part in me. Conscious of my unworthiness, after so long neglecting my Condition, after so long, confiding in my own weak Strength, after so long despairing of my Health, because I *thought* I could do any thing, and *found* I could not Cure my self; Conscious, I say, of my Unworthiness, I scarce pretend to ask for *Mercy*: I only cast my self upon my Knees and Face prostrate before thy Feet exposing and laying open all my grievous Distempers, which, every one of them (though I am humbly silent) every one speaks loudly my Necessities, and begs, with all the moving Eloquence of Misery, thy Pity and Assistance. I know my Sins provoke thy *Justice*, whilst my Misery appeals to thy Almighty Power: But thy Faithful Servant *David* tells me, that the *Israelites* provok'd Thee also; and nevertheless, not for thy sake, but for thy Name's sake, Psal. 106. 8. Thou was pleas'd to *save them*; that Thou might'st make thy mighty Power known. This is the first foundation of my Hope: I know the Credit of thy Power is engag'd in their behalf, who trust entirely in it, firmly expect it, and depend upon it:

And therefore, in this posture, I present my self with loving Confidence before thy Feet, resolving there to expect with all Humility and Patience, when thou shalt please to cast an Eye upon me, and either find the Benefit of being cur'd, or (which appears to me impossible) die in the Hands of an Omnipotent Physician. Ah my dear Jesus ! this is all that I can do : And even This, I cannot do without thy Grace : But when I have Done This, my comfort is, that Thou canst do the rest : *Lord, if thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean,* Matth. 8. 2.

Dear Christians, let us pause a while, and with a serious Attention, behold this Leper at our Saviour's Feet : Behold the lively Image of a Sinner, and the perfect Model of a Penitent : Behold both what we are, and what we ought to be : In his Disease, we see our Misery ; in his Behaviour we see our Duty : In his Disease, we see the sad effects of Sin ; we see the strong Temptations and Assaults of a most terrible Despair : In his Behaviour, we see the Fruits of true Repentance, we see the Victory of a Triumphant Hope and the great Comfort which attends a loving Confidence in God's Omnipotence.

O what a Comfort is it to an humble Penitent, to be assur'd, that as God *gives* him

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him all he *has*, so he can give him All he *wants* ! If we are almost quite oppress'd with those aridities and desolations of Mind, which none can know but by Experience ! St. Paul tells us, 2 Cor. 9. 8. *God is able to make all Grace abound in us* : If we labour under the perpetual violence of importune Temptations ; the same St. Paul assures us, Heb. 2. 18. *God is able to succour those that are tempted* : If our Temptations are so strong, and we so negligent, that after some Resistance we relapse into our Sins ; if we rise again, and yet fall ; if we renew our Resolutions, and when we think our selves securest, are surpriz'd and fall again ; St. Paul assures us, Rom. 14. 4. *God is able to make us stand* : If having try'd all ways we can imagine, we are at a loss, and know not either what to think, or what to ask ; the same Saint tells us, Ephes. 3. 20. *God is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we can ask or think.*

Is any thing too hard for God ? Gen. 18. 14. Can any thing be hard to him whose Power is infinite, and whose Will is his Power ? 1 Sam. 2. 6. *Our Lord kills and makes alive ; brings to the grave, and raises up* : His Power accompanies our Souls as far as the Gates of Hell it self, and

brings them back again. Altho' your Soul, quite over-grown with sin, may be (perhaps) in the all-seeing Eye of God, a much more horrid Object than the foulest Devil in Hell; nevertheless, go confidently with the Leper to our Saviour; croud in among the Multitudes that follow him; cast your self down upon your knees and face; say, with a truly contrite, truly humble Heart, *Matth. 8. 2. Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean:* Then shall you hear him graciously return that comfortable Answer; *I will; be thou clean.* Then shall you be transported with excess of Joy, to find and feel the truth of what I now advance; to wit, that God not only *can* relieve us, if he will, but also *will* relieve us, if we please.

S E C T. III.

That God will help us, if we please.

Altho' God's Power be the first Foundation of our Hope, his Mercy always ready to assist us, is the principal, if not the only Motive of it. This was the comfortable Meditation with which the Royal Prophet counterballanc'd all his Fears, *Psal. 26. 3. Thy Mercy,* says he, *Thy loving Kindness is always before my eyes.* Without this Comfort, he would never have

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have supported the remorsefulness of his Conscience, *Psal. 50. 4.* his *Sin was ever before him*; His continual Apprehensions and frightful Thoughts would certainly have driven him into a deep Despair, had not God's *Mercy always been before him*, *Psal. 26. 3.* The very thought of God reviv'd his drooping Spirits: He could not so much as think of Him, without thinking of his Mercy: to be God, and to be *Merciful* were to him one and the self same thing, *Psal. 59. 17.* *My God is my Defence*, says he, *and the God of my Mercy*. If he lifted up his eyes to Heaven with inflam'd desires of being happy there; he ador'd that Mercy which preserv'd the Angels, and rewarded them with Glory, *Psal. 36. 5.* *Thy Mercy, O Lord, is in the Heavens*, If he look'd down and took a prospect of this vale of Miseries; he admir'd, to see God's Mercy stoop so low, to see it most appear where there is most occasion for it, to see it superabound where Sin abounds, *Psal. 33. 5.* *The Earth is full of his Mercy*. If he look'd before him, he beheld God's Mercy starting first, preventing, and fore-running all his good Designs and Enterprises, *Psal. 59. 10.* *His mercy will prevent me*. If he look'd behind him, he beheld the self-same Mercy following him.

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82 *Motives of Hope.* §. 3.

him, promoting, carrying on, and perfecting his good Endeavours, *Psal.* 23. 6. *His Mercy shall follow me, all the days of my life.* Which way soever he cast his Eye, he saw himself defended and surrounded with God's Mercy, himself the Center, Mercy the Circumference, *Psal.* 32. 10. *Him that trusts in God, Mercy shall compass him about :* Thus did this Saint, who once had been a Sinner ; thus did he comfort and encourage his afflicted Soul, whenever the Remembrance of his Sins oppress'd his Mind : And thus may we, in imitation of him, Thus may we also answer all the troublesome suggestions of our panick Fears ; confronting Sin with *Grace*, Justice with Mercy, Fear with *Hope*, and loving Confidence in him, whose Mercy still is infinite, and always will be so, *Psal.* 100. 5. *His Mercy is everlasting.*

All this, you'll say, is little Comfort to a Sinner, who is day and night oppress'd with all the terrifying Spectres of a guilty Conscience. Every body knows that God is infinitely Merciful. But yet the Word of God assures us, and it is a fundamental Truth, which every Christian is acquainted with, *Matth* 22. 14. *That few are chosen amongst many which are call'd ; that the Gate which leads to Life, is strait and narrow, and that there*
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§. 3. *Motives of Hope.* .83

are but *few who find it*, Matth. 7. 14. So that all the splendid Appearance of God's Mercy, when 'tis well examined, seems to vanish out of sight, or shrink into a little compass, if compar'd with the innumerable numbers of those Reprobates, Rom. 9. 22. who are *prepar'd and fitted for Destruction*. Is not this enough to make a Sinner tremble? A Sinner who is conscious to himself of being much more guilty in the sight of God, than many Millions of those Souls who are already gone before him, and already suffer the eternal Flames of Hell?

These Thoughts, I must confess, are Terrible, to him whose Eyes are open, by God's Grace, to see the malice of his Sins, and see Death, Judgment, and Damnation attend: Such Thoughts as these, to such a Man, are terrible beyond expression. But however, if a Man be more afraid than hurt, where is the harm of his Fear? Are we not All oblig'd to *humble our proud Hearts under the Powerful Hand of God*, 1 Pet. 5. 6. and *work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling*? Phil. 2. 12. Is not our obligation to *Fear*, consistent with our greater motives, greater obligations to *Hope*? 'Tis one of the most dangerous mistakes that we are subject to. We seem to fancy,

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fancy, that our *Fear* destroys our *Hope*; and that we cannot *hope* unless we cease to *fear*. We take these two Affections of the Mind for mortal Enemies, because their Humours are so opposite. But, as that Friendship is the greatest, which no difference of Humour can divide: So, if we examine well the matter, we shall find, that *Fear* and *Hope*, are such inseparable Friends, they cannot possibly subsist without each other's Company; the separation of the one, is certainly the Death and Ruin of the Other. *Fear* without *Hope*, degenerates into *Despair*. *Hope*, without *Fear*, is now no longer *Hope*, but dangerous *Presumption*. If now and then our Minds are troubled and perplexed with *Fear*; we must not therefore presently conclude, that we have lost our *Hope*: No, no; we should have lost it, if we did not fear.

If the Consideration of God's Justice make a Sinner tremble, he may lawfully desire to be deliver'd from the uneasiness, the pain and the anxiety, which are the troublesome Companions of his *Fear*: But as for *Fear* it self, 'tis an essential Duty of a Christian, which cannot upon any Terms, admit a Dispensation. If the unseparable Designs and
Secrets

§. 3. *Motives of Hope.* 85

Secrets of God's Providence, are apt to fill our Souls with apprehensions and fears; this only helps us to perform the one half of our Duty, without prejudicing the performance of the other; for the more we *fear* his *Justice*, so much more we *hasten* to the shelter of his *Mercy*.

This was the only Refuge which the Royal Prophet had recourse to, *Psal.* 77. 2. *In his Days of trouble, when his Soul refused to be comforted,* v. 9. *Has God, says he, forgotten to be gracious? Has He shut up in Anger, all his tender Mercies?* v. 8. *Is his Mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his Promise fail for evermore?* Oh, no; His Promise cannot fail: He can no more deceive, than be deceiv'd. He has sign'd his Promise more then once in Scripture: And with a solemn Oath, He has deliver'd it. A *Promise* and an *Oath*, which by Commission from Himself, his Ministers are order'd to make use of.

When Sinners are dejected with Temptations of Despair, *Ezek.* 33. 10. When their *Transgressions* and their *Sins* lye heavy upon them: When they begin to *pine away* with Fear, and melancholy Thoughts, of never being able to recover: What shall we say to comfort them?

Say to them, says the Prophet, Ezek.

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33. 11, 14. *If the Wicked turn from his sin, if he repent, if he amend, v. 15. and walk, in the Statutes of Life; He shall surely live (and what can be more sure, since God himself is pleas'd to say it?) v. 15. He shall surely live; He shall not die. v. 16. None of the Sins he has committed, shall be ever mention'd to him; he shall hear of them no more; they shall not rise in judgment against him: God himself has promis'd, v. 16. He shall surely live; He shall not die.*

Say to them again; and say it boldly, in his Name, whose Justice makes them tremble, Ezek. 33. 11. As I live, says the Lord God. I have no pleasure in the Death of the Wicked; but that the Wicked turn from his way, and Live. Return, says He, Return from your evil ways: Why will you die?

Why will you Die? As who should say, you may live, if you will; I always am at hand, prepar'd to help you, if you heartily repent; you know, you may recover, if you have a mind to it; you know, that if you die, it is, because you will: As I live, I have no pleasure in your Death, and therefore I have reason to complain, why WILL you Die?

Dear Christians, What can we wish for more? We know that God can help us, if he will. Whether he will or no, we need no farther proof than his own Word.

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Word. We have his Word : We have his Oath : He cannot take his own Great Name in vain, and he has sworn by his own Life, *He has no pleasure in our Death ;* He does not, of himself, desire it ; *but that we return, and live.* O ! we are happy ; for whose sake, God swears ! But O ! how miserable are we ; if, when God himself is pleas'd to swear, we can't believe him !

*O beatorum
quorum causa
Deus jurat !
O miseros, si
nec juranti
Domino cre-
dimus !*

If Deeds are better proof than Words, let us pass from what he has said, to what he has done. What has he *done* for Sinners ? Or rather, What has he *not done* ? For them he came from Heaven ; for them he lived a painful Life on Earth ; for them he died upon the Cross, *Matth 9. 13.* *I came not, says he, to call the Just, but Sinners ;* he came because 'twas necessary he should come : And therefore, for their sakes, for whom it was most necessary, for them he principally came. He never was so kind to any, as to Sinners. All his Conversation was in their Company, he made it his chief business to oblige them ; he followed them from place to place ; he thought of nothing else but how to gain their Love ; he came with a design to enflame their
Hearts,

Hearts, he brought down fire from Heaven with him, and wish'd for nothing more, than that this fire might burn. His more-than ordinary Kindness was in all occasions so visibly remarkable, that he was taken notice of, and pointed at. The Pharisees were scandaliz'd to see't. And in those days, it was his great Reproach, *Matth. II. 19.* He was too much a *Friend to Publicans and Sinners.* All this while, alas ! they little understood his Business upon Earth. His great Compassion of their Misery was the occasion of his coming. And since their Indigence first brought him from above, it was no wonder the Relieving of it, was his chief Employment here below. He came as a Physician to his dying Friends, whom He most dearly lov'd ; and therefore took most care, and was the most concern'd, for those who were most dangerously sick. Thus did our God behave himself to Sinners. Thus did he love his Enemies, and treat them as his dearest Friends. Thus did he *live* to serve them, till at length he *died* to save them.

St. Paul concludes from hence, We now have *much more Hope* than ever, *Rom. 5. 10.* For if when we were Enemies, we then were reconcil'd to God ; undoubtedly, we now have *much more reason, being re-*

§. 3. *Motives of Hope.* 89

council'd, to hope, we shall be saved. If then before he sent his only Son, God lov'd his Enemies so dearly as to send him: We may well conclude, that since he came amongst us, since he interpos'd betwixt us and his Father's Anger, since he died to reconcile us to him, Rom. 8. 34. since he rose again, and at the right Hand of his Father, is our Advocate in Heaven, making Intercession for us; surely, now our humble Supplications, join'd with his, and offer'd in his Name, Jo. 14. 15. will for his sake, be much more easily receiv'd. If then a Contrite and an humble Heart was always so agreeable, he never would despise it; will he now refuse it? If the total Sum of all the horrid Crimes of Mankind, during several Ages; if the Malice of them altogether, could not any way divert the course of ever-flowing Mercy; if it could not hinder him from sending Jesus to redeem the World, how can we think, the Greatness of our Sins can hinder him from having Mercy on us, when we heartily repent?

Let us therefore, once for all, humbly confess, and own our Fault. The Truth is, we are proud, and willing to excuse our selves. We are willing to lay the blame of our Impenitence at our Creator's door, and say, he will not pardon us, he will not give us Grace,
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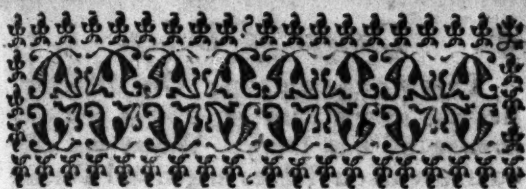
he will not save us: When, if we well examine, we shall find the Blame is always ours; we will not repent, we will not comply with his Grace; in a Word, we will not be saved.

All we can say, in our defence is, that our Sins are *great*. God will not look upon such grievous *Sinners* as we are. I cannot say, they are not *great*, or that we are not grievous *Sinners*: But, that *therefore* God will never look upon us, is as *false* as the Word of God is *true*. He hates the Sin, but loves the Sinner:

S. *Aug* he hates the Leprosie, but
Conf lib. 8. loves the Leper: And, as
cap. 3. a *Merciful Father* he *rejoyces*
more at the Repentance of one
Sinner, than the Innocence of ninety nine,
who do not stand in need of it.

Let us therefore, once again, humbly acknowledge, and confess our Fault. We only *pretend* our Leprosie is so inveterate, God will not suffer us to come into his sight, he will not cure us, he will not make us clean. The *Truth* is, we are so negligent, so stupid, so insensible of our condition, that tho' we now and then are terrified to see the Danger of it, nevertheless we will not make our Supplications to him as we ought, we will not be cur'd, we will not be cleansed.

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DANGER O F DELAY.

SECT. I.

How apt we are to defer Repentance.

THAT we are All of u., some time or other, betwixt this and Death, oblig'd under pain of Eternal Damnation, to rouse our sleepy Souls from the bewitching Lethargy of Sin; is an important Truth, which no Man can dispute. We all are fully satisfied, that if we live in the State of Sin, if our Affections are criminal, if our Hearts are divided betwixt Heaven and Earth; we must, before we die, Repent and Mend, or we are lost for ever, *Luke 12. 3. Unless we repent, we shall All per. sh.*

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This we agree upon: Our difficulty lies not in the *knowing*, but in the *performing* of our Duty. When we discourse with our selves in general Terms, *what is it* we ought to do; the Debate soon comes to an Issue: But, as we descend to the Particulars of *when* and *how*; we come not so easily to a Resolution, about the *Time*. We suppose that we are able, at our pleasure, to change our Hearts, subdue our Passions, and reform our Lives: But our Hearts, at present, are otherwise engag'd; our Passions are youthful, and very importune; our way of Life, tho' none of the best, is suitable to the common Maxims of the World, and what haste, I pray, to do just *now*, what may be done as easily another time, when ever we please? Besides; the present Circumstances are very particular: An abrupt Disengagement would now go very much against the Hair: We had better, for a time, content our Passions, and bring them to a composition: When *this* or *that* Business is over, that we may more freely attend to the Work of our Salvation, when our Company changes, when we meet with a Conjunction of more favourable Circumstances: O! then we'll begin the New Man, bid adieu

to

§. I. *Danger of Delay.* 93

to the Follies of this World ; and from that instant, date the Beginning of our Journey towards Heaven.

Thus the Colour of Piety gives a Reputation to the Delusion : We cover the popular Cheat with an agreeable Disguise : And, betwixt gratifying our Inclinations on the one Side, with a criminal Condescendence, and pacifying the Remorses of our Conscience, on the other Side, with a plausible Pretence of future Amendment, at a more convenient Time ; we make Vertue, in appearance, subscribe to our Vices, and counterfeit God's Hand to one of the worst Temptations of the Devil.

S E C T. II.

How dangerous it is to defer Repentance.

THIS clear, we are not Masters and Disposers of our Time : Only he, who was the first Author of Time, who now conserves it, and who will one Day put a final Period to all Time ; he, I say, and only he, disposes of it as he pleases.

Besides, the Changing of our Hearts is far above our single Strength ; we are not able, by our selves, so much as to *begin* so great a Work, how then shall we be able to *perform* it, at our leisure, when-

whensoever we please? St. Gregory assures us (and we know it well enough) *Ho. 12. in Ev. that GOD who promises to PARDON us, if we repent; has never promis'd us the TIME of our Repentance.*

'Tis true, we cannot but confess, (to the great Shame of our Ingratitude) that our Creator loves us far above our Merit. If we look back from hence as far as the first Creation, and carry our serious Thoughts thro' all the Steps of Providence, we meet with nothing but remarkable Instances of his good Wishes towards us. Nay, if we yet look farther back from the first moment of this World into Eternity, we find him, before the beginning of all Time, entertaining his Thoughts with the premeditation of our Welfare; and in the first Page of his eternal Accounts, we find the great Design of Man's Redemption, that stupendious Mystery of Mercy and Justice, the Incarnation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who held nothing so dear, no Obligation so important, as our Sanctification; even to the degree of laying down his Life for the Advantage of that sacred Interest. See here the Motives which we have, to think he loves us! Yet give me leave to tell you, he is not so fond of us, but that he

§. 2. *Danger of Delay.* 95

he can be angry at us, when he finds his Love neglected. Witness all those miserable Christian Souls, who *once* were happy in the same Testimonies of his Affection: Who thought, as we do, to reform their Lives at a convenient Season; who suppos'd, as we do, that God's *extraordinary* Grace would never fail to be at hand, whenever they pleas'd to have occasion for it. Alas! poor Souls, they now are lodg'd in the Flames of Hell for all Eternity; and know, too late, that tho' God never fails to bestow his *extraordinary* Graces, where he finds a faithful Correspondency of our Endeavours with his merciful Assistance; yet he often shuts his Hand, if we withdraw ours. He does not *first* desert us: yer, if deserted by us, 'tis no wonder if he treat us upon equal Terms, and so desert us.

Wonder not, that God, who is so infinitely good, can find in his Heart to abandon thus a Sinner, who stifles the Remorses of his Conscience, who resists the frequent Inspirations which invite him to Repentance, who has always something else to do when he thinks of his Duty; always is so rude, so scornfully uncivil, in receiving all the Embassies of Peace, which Heaven sends him; that
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96 *Danger of Delay.* §. 2.

every trifling Object, which salutes his Fancy; every miserable Creature, which a silly Passion recommends to him, is sure to have the Preference, and be the first admitted.

How often does God court us, when we are alone, as it were carefully managing that favourable Occasion, when it may be presum'd, we are at leisure for his Entertainment? But, alas! we are perhaps never less alone, than when we are alone: The common Enemy of Mankind, is then most busy to prevent the Advantage of such a happy Circumstance. How often he does apply himself to us, when any sudden Accident has cross'd our Inclinations, when we have been disappointed in our Intrigues, when we begin to find our Labour lost in the pursuit of what we hunted after, when we sit down angry, and affronted at the confusion of our Mistake, almost ready to fall out with the World for having cheated us; then it is, that he takes hold of this conjuncture; begins in a loving manner to expostulate with us; to exprobate to us, how treacherous a Friend we find the World to be; on the contrary, how constant and faithful a Friend he has been to us, from all Eternity to this Moment; how ready he is, notwithstanding

§. 2. *Danger of Delay.* 97

standing all that's past, to receive us with open Arms into favour again, if we return sincerely to him. And how do we hearken to all this? Why, truly, it passes away like a little Fit of Melancholly; we were *then* in an ill humour; we are *now* glad 'tis over; and so we think no more on't. Whatever God speaks to our Hearts, is all out of doors: Our Hearts are shut against him, all the time *Apoc. 3. 20. He stands at the door and knocks*; and we neglect him, letting him *stand* and *wait* our leisure; we approve the Friendship of the World before his; and tho' we may have some slight thoughts of hearing him some other time, yet for the present, we flatly deny him Entrance, and refuse him Audience.

Let us now consider a little: What pitiful Worms we are who, thus condemn the Almighty, who he is, whom we affront; what Trifles we prefer before him; and we shall not wonder, if at length he leave us, and desert us, with a Resolution, never more to offer us these extraordinary Favours, *Jo. 8. v. 21. I go away, says he, and you shall seek me, and you shall Die in your Sins.*

SECT. III.

Reasons why Delay is so dangerous.

THAT I may discover, yet more clearly, the Extravagance of Sinners, who defer the entire Conversion of their Hearts from time to time, upon a vain Presumption of chusing their own time when they please; I suppose, as a fundamental Principle, 1 Pet. 5. v. 5. that God gives Grace to the humble, and resists the proud.

He who values himself upon being Wise enough in the management of his Salvation; who neglects the time which God's great Mercy offers him; who presumes he can, when e're he pleases, chuse the time of his Conversion; such a Person, if ever he approach the Throne of Grace, comes in a disposition directly opposite to Reconciliation; he carries *Pride* bare-fac'd in the very Front of him; and the Address he presents, is endors'd with the very same Fault which he begs Pardon for.

A true Convert comes trembling, with a Heart truly *humbled* under the Omnipotent Hand of an offended Majesty; and such a Penitent will always find Favour; a Contrite and *Humble* Heart God will never despise; all his former

§. 3. *Danger of Delay.* 99

former Offences will pass for nothing, *Ezek. 33.16. None of his Sins he committed, shall be mentioned to him:* In the Day of his Conversion, his Impiety shall never hurt him: What time soever God shall please to mark out to him, if he manage that, he is secure.

But, if a Sinner carelessly reject God's Inspirations, and from time to time, neglect the opportunities he mercifully offers him; if he behave himself, as if he thought his time of Reconciliation were entirely at his own disposing; and upon this account, when he thinks fit, presents himself before the Throne of Grace; his very Coming *in this manner* is an Act of *Pride*, a Pride by which he dangerously presumes upon a more than ordinary Favour, such as he knows has been denied to many Thousands, who are Damn'd for ever, for less Sins than his, and less neglect of the Almighty; a Pride, which is the greatest provocation that can be imagined, in as much as it abuses all his infinite Goodness, Longanimity, and Patience, not only to the utmost degree of contempt, but even to an impudent assurance of obtaining Mercy when we please, altho' we have *so much, so often, and so long*, contemned it. This is a sufficient Reason,

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son, why God may abandon such *proud* Penitents as often as he pleases: And this Reason is attended with a sort of Obligation (if a Man may term it so,) incumbent upon Providence, if not always, at least generally, and for the most part, to treat them according to their merit.

This Obligation arises from two Titles. God is the *Creator* of Man, and the *Redeemer* of Sinful Man. The first gives him the Perogative of being the supreme and universal Lord and Master of the Universe; under which Character, it belongs to him, to give Law to all the parts of it, and take such methods, as may with a smooth and easie, yet strong and steddy Influence, promote and carry on the great Design of the Creation. Hence comes the Obligation of supporting the Credit, and maintaining the Authority of his Government, which sinks immediately, and falls to nothing, if his too great Indulgence *always* tolerate the open Violation of his Precepts, join'd with all the Indignities, Affronts, and Insolencies, of a haughty Subject, that will not be reclaim'd but when he pleases, will not take the advantage of those favourable opportunities which are so often offer'd him, but defers the *only necessary*
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§. 3. *Danger of Delay.* 101

Business of his Life from time to time, upon a proud presumption of being receiv'd at any hour whensoever he pleases. Nothing under Heaven can in this occasion, keep up the Spirit and Vigour of Discipline amongst us, and place the Fear of God before our Eyes, but a just and severe Punishment, such as becomes the Indignation of an angry God abus'd, affronted, and contemn'd; which is, to treat us as we treat him, leave us as he finds us, and flatly refuse us Audience, when we make supplications to him.

This Motive, which arises from the Title of *Creator*, is abundantly sufficient; but yet the Title of *Redeemer* is a far more powerful inducement to the rigour of Justice. The Creation of the World was but a small Expence: A Word said, and the whole Work done. But the Redemption of sinful Man, the Extraction of him out of the profound Abyss of *Sin* and *Malice*, was a more laborious Master-piece of Mercy and Justice; it cost him his descent from Heaven, a painful Life for many Years upon Earth, and the last drop of his most precious Blood upon the Cross. Having redeem'd us from the Devil, at so dear a rate, and having paid the utmost price of our Salvation,

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He has a strict Right to the Honour and Reputation of his Mercy, *Isa.* 42. 8. He is Lord of All, and his Glory he will not give to Another. He is our Lord and Master; by Redemption all of us are his; he has paid the full Discharge of our Account; but he will not apply the value of this Payment to those Persons whose Pride will either challenge the Credit, or share it with him; he bestows it only where it may be evident, if not to all the World, at least to every Sinner's Conscience who receives the benefit, that nothing but the Power of Grace could work so wonderful a Resurrection, and free him from the Servitude of Sin.

He who made our Hearts, cannot but know the Temper of our Inclinations. He cannot but see, how partial and unequal we are in our Judgments. If any thing be amiss with us, we presently begin to murmur and repine within our selves, as if God only were the Author of our Failings. But, if we succeed in any thing, that seems Praiseworthy, either in the Sight of God or Man, we presently assume the Reputation of it to our selves. Our Faith teaches us the contrary: And we seem to believe it. But yet, I know not how

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§. 3. Danger of Delay. 103

it is, our Pride which comes S. Bern.
into the World with us, *de ord. vit*
That Vice which is the first we & mor.
fight with, and the last we con- insit.

quer, is so apt to work upon
our Judgment, that if we examine well,
we cannot but observe, we always are a
great deal more inclin'd to magnifie our
own Endeavours, than to admire the
Power of Grace. If God should never
treat us as we merit; if he should ne-
ver abandon those, who from his Good-
ness take occasion to abuse it; we
should grow insensible of our necessi-
ties; we should forget our Obligations
to the Grace of our Redeemer; we should
behave our selves, as if we thought that
All is done by our High Hand, and not by
the Assistance of our Lord, Deut. 32. 27.
This is one Reason, and a just one, why
he is oblig'd (as I may say) in honour,
if not always, at least generally, and for
the most part, to refuse them Audience
in a Time of their own chusing, who
during the Time which he thought pro-
per for their purpose, never would
vouchsafe to hearken to him, *Jo. 8. v. 21.*
I go away, says he, and you shall seek me,
and you shall die in your Sins.

S E C T. IV.

That we ought to begin immediately, without Delay.

S. Greg. **H**E who has promis'd PAR-
 Hom. 12. DON to those who Re-
 in Evang. pent, has never promis'd TRUE
 REPENTANCE to those who
defer it. A Man must be a Stranger to
 the ordinary course of Providence, who
 does not know, that there are certain
 Times in which our God is kinder and
 more favourable to us; when Clouds
 of Anger disappear, when Heaven seems
 to smile upon us, and the Almighty
 seems to meet half-way the Prayers and
 Addresses of his People. 'Tis not that
 God is liable to any Shadow of Incon-
 stancy: He always is inclin'd to Mer-
 cy, and nothing but our Sins can force
 him to the Rigour of his Justice. Some-
 times he showers down his Graces in
 plentiful abundance; visits and inspires
 us with good *Thoughts*, good *Inclinations*
 to amend our Lives; strongly and sweet-
 ly moves us; frequently and impor-
 tunely presses and solicites us to true
 Repentance. But, if we slight his Fa-
 vours, he withdraws them from us:
 Mercy neglected and abus'd, gives place
 to Justice: And all those *great and ex-*
traordinary

§. 4. *Danger of Delay.* 105

extraordinary Graces, which before abounded, are denied us; that we may, by this means, grow sensible of their Necessity and our Dependency, their Power and our Weakness.

‘What wise Man is there in the World, who reading This, will not fear the *deferring* of his Conversion, tho’ it were but for one Day? Who knows, whether this shall be the *last* Day, or no, that ever God will call him? *Prov. ch. i.* God says, *I call’d, and you refused to come; I held out my Hand, and you would not look towards me; and therefore I will FORSAKE you in your Extremity.* He does not say, how many times he *call’d*, or how long he *held out his Hand*. God says, *I stand at the Door, and knock*: But he says not, how often. Almighty God is ready and bountiful to *knock* and *call*; but yet, he binds himself to no *Time* or *Space*, but comes and goes at his pleasure. And they who take not their Times when they are offer’d, are excuseless before his Justice, and do not know, whether ever it shall be offer’d them again, or no: For that this

Christ. Directory. p. 2.
c. 7. Sect. 3.
v. 35.
Ibid. n. 37.
A. D. 1673.

E 5

‘ thing

106 *Danger of Delay.* §. 4.

‘ thing is only in the Will and Knowledge of God alone ; who takes Mercy where it pleases him best, and is bound to none. And when the prefix’d Time of calling is once past, woe be to that Party ; for a thousand Worlds [perhaps] will not purchase it again.

This Reason is abundantly sufficient, to make us manage carefully the *Work of our Salvation with fear and trembling ; and humble our selves under the powerful Hand of God*, Phil. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 6. without pretending to any *absolute* Security of our Admittance whensoever we please. We are certainly Damn’d, if we never ask Pardon ; probably it may be yet time enough, if we ask it now : And in concurrence of a *certain* Ruin on the one side, with a *probability* of a Safety on the other, no wise Man will lose time to deliberate upon the Choice.

Some will say, perhaps, ’Tis a severe Case, to renounce all worldly Affections, and deny them what’s most dear to them ; to declare War against the most violent of Passions, and to undergo the hardship of perpetual Service in the Engagement ; if we have no *absolute* Security of making Peace when ever we desire it. Had we an Assurance of our Pardon, whensoever we ask it, it were
some

§. 4. *Danger of Delay.* 107

some Encouragement to undertake a thorough Reformation of our Lives. But, to renounce All, upon a hazard of gaining Nothing, is too cold an Invitation to encounter so painful and laborious a Task.

O Man, says St. Paul to the Romans, Ch. 9. 20. *Who art thou, that thus repliest against God?* Who are you, that dare presume to Article with him, in this manner? Is it not enough, to have so frequently transgress'd his Laws, so much contemn'd his Menaces, so long abus'd his Patience? Is it not enough to have idoliz'd the Objects of your Passion? To have set up your single self in opposition to all the Dictates of Duty and Obedience? to have affronted the Omnipotent Hand, which (had not his Mercy held it,) had long since sunk your miserable Soul to the Abyss of Hell? Is not this enough, unless the same Pride, which began your Misery, accompany also the Petition of your Pardon? Remember, that *God resists the Proud, and gives Grace only to the Humble*, 1 Pet. 5. 5. Remember, that he is a very proud Beggar, who will not ask an Alms, except he be assur'd before-hand of receiving it: And, that God is so far from receiving that insolent Request of such a proud Peti-

108 *Danger of Delay.* §. 4.

Peritioner, that (on the contrary,) he openly declares, *he hates him, Eccl. 25. 4. My Soul, says he, hates a proud Beggar.*

Ah Christians! we must (if we hope for Salvation,) we must come in another Disposition. We must not lose time upon the Debate, whether or no we have a certain prospect of Success, *Phil. 2. 12. We must work our Salvation with fear and trembling. 1 Pet. 5. 6. and Humble our selves under the powerful Hand of God.* In this Conjunction, we have nothing else to do, but *flie in all haste to the Throne of Grace, Heb. 4. 16.* Every Moment is precious: Every Moment of Delay encreases the Danger.

The Prodigal Son, whose Imitation our Saviour recommends to us, proposing him as a great Example of an humble Penitent, did not lose time in studying, whether his Father would receive him or not; he did not beforehand enquire into his Father's Humour; how he stood affected to him; whether he were ready to admit him; or determin'd never more to look upon him; But, immediately, at his first coming to himself, he said, *Luke 15. 17, 18. I will rise, and go to my Father, and say to him, Father, I have sinn'd.* So far was he from any absolute assurance of his Pardon, and
so.

§. 4. *Danger of Delay.* 109

so sensible of his Unworthiness; he did not so much as offer to demand a perfect Reconciliation, but left himself entirely to his Father, to dispose of him, and do with him what he pleased, v. 19. *Father I am not worthy to be call'd your Son.*

Alas! What can we do in this Condition? We must redouble our Prayers which we have heretofore so often huddled over, with as much Indifference and Coldness, as if we were *afraid* lest God should *hear* us, and *assist* us with his Grace to *take up our Cross, deny ourselves, and follow him*, Matth. 16. 24.

If after a Month, a Year, or more, we find no great effect of Mercy, we must still persevere firm in our Endeavours: The more we *fear* God's Anger, the faster we must *fly* to the Protection of his Goodness. We must not sink under the Apprehensions of our Reprobation, but without disputing our Destiny, we must resolve, either to obtain Pardon, or die in the Demanding of it.

If the Almighty seem to take no notice of us; if He seem, as it were, to command us out of his Sight, we have nothing else to say, *John* 6. v. 68. but, *Lord, whither shall we go?* What way is there to fly from thine Anger, but by the Speediest recourse we possible can make.

110 *Danger of Delay.* §. 4.

make to the Shelter of thy infinite Goodness? We know, we deserve an Eternal Banishment from thy Presence: We know, we often have refus'd Thee Audience: We know, it was our common Answer, *Prov. 3. 28. Go, and Come again* another time: And therefore, we know we have no reason to complain, if now we are forsaken and abandon'd by Thee. But, this is only what we deserve; 'tis only what we justly *Fear*: Thou nevertheless, commandest us to *Hope* otherwise; and 'tis in compliance with this Command, *Rom. 4. 18. that we Hope even against Hope.* We come not to dispute about our Heaven or our Hell; we come not to capitulate upon the Articles of our Salvation; we only *fear* as we have reason, and *hope* as we ought; so that, setting aside the whole Sollicitude of that Affair, we leave it entirely to thy Mercy. We come with a Contrite and an Humble Heart, full of nothing but a sincere Sorrow for all our past Offences, joined with a hearty Resolution, never to offend thee any more: Except it may be an Offence for Sinners, such as we are, to continue in thy Presence; which cannot be: No, no; though we should see thy Sword of Justice drawn against us, and thy Omnipotent Hand stretch'd

§. 4. *Danger of Delay.* III

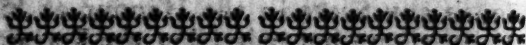
stretch'd out to strike us dead at thy Feet,
we will not quit the Place, *Job. 13. 15.*
*Although thou killest us, we will still trust
in Thee.*

This is the humble Heart, which
charms our God; the Heart which he
cannot refuse, *Psal. 50.* Such a *Contrite,*
such an *Humble Heart,* He never will de-
spise. This is the only Disposition that
can make amends for the Abuse of so
much Goodness; and for the deferring
our Conversion so long, upon a proud
Presumption of Amendment when we
pleas'd. Such an humble Heart, as this,
gives God no reason to be jealous of his
Honour: His Hand appears manifestly
in the Management and Preparation of
it, *Exod. 8. 19. The Finger of God is here.*
Such a Convert, as this, will never chal-
lenge any Share in the Honour of his
Conversion; but, admiring the Benefit,
will resign the Honour, and humble
himself so much the more in his Presence
who made him what he is. But God
will always have the Honour of the Work;
he will be Merciful when he thinks fit,
and not allow proud Man to dispose of
his Mercy; he will take his own Time,
and confound the presumptuous Pride
of those, who (as if they were God's Ma-
ster, rather than his Servants,) make no
doubt

112 *Danger of Delay.* §. 4.

doubt, but they can chuse a *Time* convenient, when they please.

Sinners, deceive not your selves. Think not that God is always equally dispos'd to hear us, whensoever we appoint our time of Audience. He will not suffer us to pretend to the Honour of beginning our Conversion, and challenging his greatest Graces, at our leisure. 'Tis true, he died to save us : But tho' he died for our *Benefit*, he died for God's *Honour* ; and will not part with any Share of this Honour, to humour a *proud* Penitent, *Isa.* 42. 8. He is *Lord* of All, and *his Glory* he will not give to another, *1 Pet.* 5. 5. He *resists the Proud*, and only to the *Humble* he gives *Grace* in this World, *Glory* in the next.



A CONTRITE H E A R T.

SECT. I:

Sorrow for our Sins.

*Anton. das
Chagas.*

O My God ! God of my
Soul, my Life, my
Heart,

§. 2. *A Contrite Heart.* 113

' Heart, and All that is within me! I
' have sinned, O my God; I have offend-
' ed Thee; I have done ill before the
' Face of Heaven and Earth. Neither
' the Stars of Heaven, nor the Grains of
' Sand upon the Earth, are equal to the
' boundless number of my grievous Sins.

Ah my dear God! my *Maker*, my
Preserver, my *Redeemer*, and my *Only Be-*
nefactor, how it grieves me to
have So offended Thee! 'I am *Ibid.*

' much more troubled at my
' great Ingratitude, than at the Great-
' ness of the Torments I deserve.

O that I could bewail with Tears of
Blood, the base Unworthiness of my Be-
haviour to my *only* most Obliging, most
Endearing, most Deserving *Friend*! A
Friend who *always* lov'd me, even when
I lov'd my silly *Humours*, and his misera-
ble *Creatures* more than *Him*, who always
lov'd me, even when I was his most
Ungrateful Enemy; and notwithstanding
All, still *Made* me whatsoe'er I *was*, still
Gave me whatsoe'er I *Had*, and still *Invi-*
ted me, nay, even *Courted* me, with daily
Inspirations of his Grace, to *Love* him
above All Things. O that my Eyes were
living Fountains of continual Repen-
tance, to bewail my base Unworthiness!

And yet, altho' my bleeding Heart
should

114 *A Contrite Heart.* §. 1.

should burst out at my Eyes, my Grief would ne'er be equal to my grievous Sins; the Guilt of which is infinite, and infinitely greater than I'm able to conceive. Tho' I should weep with Tears of Blood in every corner of the Earth where I have sinn'd; All that would never wash away the Guilt or Scandal of my Crimes. There's nothing but the bleeding Sacrifice of the Unspotted Lamb of God; there's nothing but the Blood of J E S U S dying for my sake upon the Cross; there's nothing else can reconcile me to the Sovereign Majesty which I have so provok'd; there's nothing else can wash out the deep Stains of my unspeakable Ingratitude.

This is that Mercy of my God, which the admiring World has reason to call Great: That Mercy which is truly Great, not only in it's self, but Great to all that are Partakers of it. *Psal. 50. Have Mercy on me, O God, according to thy Great Mercy. Wash my poor Soul from its Iniquity, and cleanse it from its Sins. Sprinkle me only with the Blood of J E S U S, and I shall be cleans'd: Wash me with it, and I shall be whiter than Snow. Cast me not away from Thy Face, but look upon a contrite and an humble Heart, which (for the sake of Thy Beloved Son, with whom Thou art*

well.

well.

§. 2. *A Contrite Heart.* 115

well pleased, Matth. 17. 5.) I hope, *Thou wilt not despise*; but, that *Thou wilt have Mercy on me, O God, according to Thy Great Mercy.*

S E C T. II.

Resolutions of Amendment.

I Have said: Now I begin, Psal. 76. Alas! How often have I said So, and as often broke my Word! And, what hope have I Now to keep it, more than any other Time? When I renew the doleful Memory of my Relapses, how I tremble at the very Thought! To think how often, in a lukewarm Fit of Piety, I have imagin'd, I was Now beginning to amend my Life; and yet, how Soon, how Easily, how Shamefully, hath every sudden Passion, every sinful Inclination, every silly Humour overcome my best and firmest Resolutions! Proud, as I was, I wonder'd always at my Weakness, and could scarce Believe it, tho' I Saw it. Proud as I was, still went on in the same Road; still fancy'd it was easy to Reform, when I resolv'd upon't; and still excus'd myself, by laying all the Fault upon my Neighbours, my Employments, or some other Circumstances of my Life. And yet, what Place soever I have liv'd in, whatsoever Business I have been employed in, whatsoever

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ever *Circumstances* have attended me, thro' all the several *Changes* of my *Fortune*; I have *always* been the same *Frail Creature*, always unequally unfaithful to my *Word*. What *Hope* then have I now to keep it, more than any other *Time*?

Must I *Despair*? Yes, yes: 'Tis absolutely *Necessary* for me to *Despair* of my own *Strength*, that may I seriously *begin* to *hope* in nothing else but *Him*, who gives *Grace* to the *Humble*, and resists the *Proud*, 1 Pet. 5. 5. And may I by his *Grace* *persevere* all my *Life*, improving each *Day* more and more, in this *Despair*, which is the *Reason* why, I *hope* more now than any other *Time*.

O that I had long since *Despair'd* entirely of my own *Sufficiency*, and plac'd my *Confidence* in nothing but the powerful *Assistance* of his *Grace*; I should not then have been so *Negligent*, so openly *expos'd* on every side, to the continual *surprizes* of my *Passions*. I should then have carefully *employ'd* the precious *Moments* of my *Time*, either in *studying* how to *meet* my several *Dangers*, or *for casting* how to *avoid* Them. I should then have *pray'd* as heartily, as Men do in a *Storm*; who every moment fear to sink, and every moment lift their trembling *Hands*, and weeping *Eyes* to *Heaven*; the same

angry

§. 2. *A Contrite Heart.* 117

angry Heaven, whence they justly apprehend their fatal Ruin. Ah my God! how seldom have I *prayed* so! And how often have I *ask'd* thy Grace, as *Carelessly* as if I had no need of it!

My *Resolutions*, like my *Prayers*, hitherto have only been in *General Terms*: That now I would *Reform* my *Life*; I would no longer be a *Slave* to *Passion* and *Humour*; I would now *Begin* to be a *Saint*; And, O! how I have been *asham'd* to *Think* of all my *Follies*! Alas! This very *Pride* which made me thus *Asham'd*, was That which made me *Fancy*, 'twas an *Easy* matter to *Amend*; and therefore made me *Careless* in observing the *particular Occasions* of my *Greatest Sins*, the *Remedies* which ought to be *apply'd*, and the *Impediments* which ought to be *remov'd*. But since the sad *Experience* of my *Weakness* makes me *wiser*, I am now *resolv'd*, it shall be the *chief Business* of my *Life*, to *watch* and *study* all the *Motions* of my *Heart*; What *Passions* are *predominant*; what *Inclinations* second them; by what *Approaches* They gain ground; and by what *Means*, in This or That *particular Occurrence*, They may be *resisted*, *weakened*, and *subdued*.

A Master Work-man needs but now and then apply his Rule, because his *Habit*

bit guides his skilful Hand. But I, unskilful as I am, who only *now* Begin the necessary Art of living well, and have so many Years contracted an ill Habit of neglecting all those holy Precepts; I must *now*, not only in my *Morning-Recollection*, carefully *foresee* each Danger I am like to meet with in the *Day*; but frequently *Renew* those pious Resolutions; in *All* Occasions *consult* the Eternal Truth which came from Heaven to instruct me; and *Examine* seriously, if the *Employment* of my Thoughts, Words, Actions, and Desires, be *suitable* to so Divine a Rule.

All This I am *Resolv'd* upon, in Presence of my God, and the whole Court of Heaven. Help me, All ye Blessed Spirits, *Luke 15. 7.* who are joyful Witnesses of these my holy Resolutions; assist me now to make an humble Offering of them All, *before the Throne of Grace*, *Heb. 4. 16.* and join your better Prayers with mine, to beg a *Blessing* for Them; without *which*, altho' I daily *water* Them with penitential Tears, they never will *Encrease*, and bring forth Fruit. *I have said: Now I begin.* Have Mercy on me, O God, according to Thy Great Mercy, *Psal. 76. 11.* For *Such a Change* comes only from the Right Hand of the Highest.



AN HUMBLE HEART.

SECT. I.

The Necessity and Advantages of Humility.

‘ALL our Saviour’s Life, *S. Aug.*
‘and Conversation up- *lib. de*
‘on Earth, was a con- *ver.*
‘tinual Instruction for the mo- *rel.*
‘delling of ours. But above
‘all things, He particularly recommend-
‘ed to us the Example of his great Hu-
‘mility: *Learn of me, says he, because I*
‘*am humble of Heart, and you will find rest*
‘*for your Souls, Matth. 11. 29.*

‘The Necessity of this in-
‘comparable Vertue is so *Rodri-*
‘great, that ’tis impossible, *guez. Par.*
‘without it, to make any *2. Tr. 3.*
‘progress into a Spiritual *ch. 1.*
‘Life. Our Pride corrupts
‘and ruins all our vertuous Actions, un-
‘less Humility begin, continue, and
‘conclude them. ‘*St.*

Rodri- ' St. Gregory says, True Ver-
 guez. tue never grows in any Soul,
 ch. 2. ' but when 'tis nourish'd by
 ' its proper Root, which is Hu-
 ' mility. This plain Compa-
 ' rison expresses very well its Nature,
 ' and its Properties. 1. A Flower fades
 ' and withers when 'tis parted from its
 ' Root. 2. The Root is never better than
 ' when hidden in the Earth, and tram-
 ' pled under Foot. 3. A Tree is longer
 ' liv'd, and yields more Fruit, accord-
 ' ing as the Root of it is deeper, and
 ' lies lower under ground.

Rodr. ' How much our Faith de-
 ch. 3. ' pends upon Humility, the A-
 ' postle tells us, when he speaks
 ' of Casting down Imaginations,
 ' 2 Cor. 10. 5. every high thing that exalts
 ' its self against the Knowledge of God; and
 ' captivating every Thought to the Obedience
 ' of Christ. Man's Reason is but Weak,
 ' and subject to mistake; and therefore
 ' a submissive Spirit is required; the
 ' want of which, has been the first be-
 ' ginning of all Heresies, and verified
 ' St. Paul's Prediction, 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 7.
 ' That in the last Days, dangerous Times
 ' will come, because Men will be proud; de-
 ' spisers of good People; and ever learning,
 ' but never coming to the Knowledge of Truth.

The

§. I. *An Humble Heart.* 121

' The same Humility which guides
 ' our Faith, encourages our
 ' Hope: Because the more *Rodr. c.*
 ' we fear our Weakness, and *10. 11.*
 ' diffide in our own Strength,
 ' the more we have recourse to God, in
 ' whom we place our Confidence: And
 ' thus, *2 Cor. 12. 10.* *When we are Weak,*
 ' says the Apostle, *we are Strong,* That is
 ' to say, when once we rightly under-
 ' stand our selves, and being thoroughly
 ' convinced of our Infirmary, we serious-
 ' ly begin to hope in nothing, but the
 ' Assistance of God's Grace: Then 'tis
 ' that he himself begins to take in Hand,
 ' the Management of our Affairs; pro-
 ' vides for us in all our spiritual Wants;
 ' supports, and guides us, by a special
 ' Providence, in all our Pious Under-
 ' takings. 'Tis with us, as 'tis with Beg-
 ' gars, who expose their Ulcers and their
 ' Miseries; the more they lay them o-
 ' pen in the Publick View, the more
 ' they move our Pity, and obtain more
 ' Alms of Charitable Persons: So the
 ' more sincerely we confess, and with
 ' profound Humility acknowledge, our
 ' extream Necessities, exposing them in
 ' presence of our God, the more we move
 ' him to compassionate our miserable
 ' State and to bestow upon us more a-

F

' bun-

'bundantly the Riches of his Grace.
'Humility, as it encourages our Hope,
'so it improves our Charity. An humble
Man perpetually considering his innu-
merable Faults and Imperfections, the
more he sees his great Unworthiness, the
more he wonders at God's Patience, and
is more inclin'd to love his Goodness a-
bove all things. 'Nothing

P. Crasset. 'makes me better under-
T. 2. Con. 'stand how good God is,
14. 'than when I see with how
'much Patience he endures

'a Man, who is not able to endure him-
'self. 'Tis he who is offended; I am
'the Offender. I, all Wickedness; and
'he, all Holiness. As wicked as I am,
'I can't endure my self: As holy as he
'is, he suffers me with Patience. I only
'see a small Part of my Faults, and hate
'my self: He sees them all, and yet he
'does not cease to love me. I have such
'a horror of my self, when I consider
'how inconstant, and how frail I am;
'and yet, I cannot perceive that God has
'any horror of me. On the contrary,
'the more I humbly own my Wicked-
'ness, the more obliging and endearing
'Proofs he gives me of insuperable
'Goodness.

'Our

§. 1. *An Humble Heart.* 123

Our Humility preserves
 and guards our Chastity. *Rodr. ch. 3.*
 St. Bernard does not fear to
 say, that even the Purity of the Blessed
 Virgin her self, had never been agreeable to
 God, without it. Besides, it
 is not only necessary to pre- *Corn. a*
 serve our Chastity; but is *Lap. in c.*
 the best and most effectual *1. ad Rom.*
 Remedy that can be, to pro-
 cure it. Luxury is the Punishment of
 Pride, and Chastity the Triumph of
 Humility. St. Hierom says, 'Tis hard to
 find a Heretick that loves Chastity; altho'
 in his Discourses he may seem to praise it,
 and pretend to practise it. The Reason is,
 because God gives Grace only to the
 Humble, and resists the Proud, *1 Pet. 5.*
 5. and where there is no Grace, there
 is no Chastity, but all Concupiscence.
 Hence comes the common saying of
 our Novelists, that Chastity is impos-
 sible; and 'tis no wonder that they
 think so; for it is so, to the Proud, and
 Graceless, who can ne'er be truly
 Chaste, till they are truly Humble.
 They are given up by God to all Unclean-
 ness thro' the Lust of their own Hearts, *Rom.*
1. 24. and 'tis but just, that if the Soul
 refuses due submission to God, the Bo-
 dy should be found, by his permission,

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‘ as untractable and disobedient to such
 ‘ a Soul. Because, says St. Gregory, by
 ‘ *Pride they prefer themselves before Men;*
 ‘ *by Luxury they soon become like Beasts.*

‘ A Man might easily go
Rodr. ch. 3. ‘ thro’ all other Vertues, and
 ‘ observe Humility, as neces-
 ‘ sary for the acquiring and preserving of
 ‘ them all. But, what has been already
 ‘ said, suffices to convince us, that the
 ‘ most compendious Method of aspiring
 ‘ to Perfection, is to make it our chief
 ‘ Business to be *truly Humble.*

‘ Tis enough to add, that
 P. Crasset ‘ all our Vertues and good
 T. 1. Lund. ‘ Actions, without Humili-
 3. de l’ A- ‘ ty, will never save us; and
 vent. ‘ that all our Sins and Im-
 ‘ perfections, with true Hu-
 ‘ mility, will never damn us; for as soon
 ‘ as ever we are truly Humble, all our
 ‘ Vices leave us, and immediately all
 ‘ Vertues take possession of our Heart.
 ‘ My Soul! why are we then discoura-
 ‘ ged? Why do we despair? Why are
 ‘ we now and then so melancholly, when
 ‘ we think of all our Imperfections and
 ‘ Faults? If therefore we have Reason to
 ‘ Despair, have we not therefore Reason
 ‘ to be Humble? Let us be so then, and
 ‘ we shall have no longer any Reason to
 ‘ Despair.

§. I. *An Humble Heart.* 125

Despair. Let us but humble our selves
in presence of our God, we shall soon
obtain all that we have not ; we shall
be able to do all that we cannot ; and
we shall receive all that we deserve not.
You cannot fast : At least you can
humble your self. You cannot weep
for your Sins ? Humble your self, be-
cause you cannot. You have not Time
enough, nor Health enough, to say
much Prayers. However, you may be
as humble every jot, as if you had. Do
what you can, you always Pray with
much Distraction. Be content, and
humble. You are now and then sur-
priz'd, and fall into some Sin. Have
patience : Take more Care another
Time, and be more Humble ever after.

An humble Heart God never will despise,
Psal. 50. And is not this enough, to
shew us the *Necessity* and great *Advantage*
of Humility ? How comfortable is the
Thought of it, to them whose want of
Health, or other Circumstances, will not
suffer to make use of Corporal Austeri-
ties, in Satisfaction for their Sins ! What
Comfort is it to them, to reflect, that still
they have a Refuge left them in the
Sanctuary of this Vertue. 'Tis the only
One they have, if we believe an Ancient
Father of the Church. *Whoever has com-*

mitted grievous Sins; and has
 a Body weak and sickly; let
 him tread the Footsteps of Hu-
 mility: In all Things, let him
 follow where the Spirit and
 the Impulse of that Vertue lead
 him: 'Tis the only Way he has to save his Soul.

S E C T. II.

First Degree of Humility.

THE first Degree, is to
 have mean Opinion
 of our selves, to think our
 selves contemptible, and judge, that we
 deserve to be despis'd by all the World.
 The Knowledge of our selves, our
 Weakness, and our Misery, is no Hu-
 mility; but only is the necessary
 Means to come to this Degree of it.

A Person truly Humble,
 always has before his Eyes
 his own Defects and Imper-
 fections; in others, he considers chiefly
 the Perfections and Vertues which he
 finds; and thus he always is persua-
 ded that his Neighbours are much bet-
 ter, and more perfect than himself. He
 loves them with respect and tender-
 ness. He is not angry at his being va-
 lued less than they, but glad to see
 them All preferr'd before him.

His

§. 2. *An Humble Heart.* 127

' His Sins, which ever are
' before him, make him sen- *Ib. Ps. 50*
' sible, that he deserves the
' worst of Punishments: And therefore,
' whatsoever happens to him, he esteems
' it infinitely less than his Iniquity de-
' serves. He never thinks himself af-
' fronted. Whatsoever wrong is done
' him, he receives it as a Favour, in com-
' parison of what he has just Reason to
' expect. He suffers all, in silence, upon
' this Account: And far from breaking
' out into Complaints, he only calls to
' Mind that humble Saying of the Pro-
' phet *Micah, 7. 9. I will bear the Indigna-*
' *tion of my God, because I have sinn'd against*
' *him.*

' The hardest Measure we
' can suffer in this Life; the *Rod. ch. 7.*
' greatest and the most se-
' vere Humiliations we can think of, are
' incomparably less then what is due to
' any single Crime, which we commit
' against the Majesty of God. Can we
' imagine, all the World is able to disho-
' nour him *too much*, who has dishonour'd
' God himself? And is't not just, that
' having slighted and neglected his Crea-
' tor, he himself should be despis'd by
' *All*, and live for ever after in disgrace?
' Remember, that a Sinner is a *Child of*
F 4 ' *Wrath,*

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‘ *Wrath*, Ephes. 2. 3. an Enemy of God; a
 ‘ Monster of Deformity, condemn’d to
 ‘ everlasting Flames: Remember this;
 ‘ and you will shrink below the Feet of
 ‘ all the World; because you will be
 ‘ then convinc’d, that howsoever you
 ‘ are humbled and oppress’d, a Man
 ‘ who has but once offended God, de-
 ‘ serves to suffer more.

‘ Altho’ my Conscience
Rodr. Ibid. ‘ accuse me nor, Though I
 ‘ know nothing of my self, says
 ‘ the Apostle, 1 Cor. 4. 4. yet I am not
 ‘ hereby justified; but he that judges me, is
 ‘ God. When we consider well, how
 ‘ doubtful our Condition is, and how
 ‘ we always are uncertain of our being
 ‘ justified: This, this alone, without all
 ‘ other Motives, which are numberless,
 ‘ is of it self abundantly sufficient to
 ‘ humble us. What Christian is there,
 ‘ that would dare to shew his Face? Or
 ‘ Man that would not rather wish to
 ‘ sink into the Bowels of the Earth, to
 ‘ hide himself? If this Reflection once
 ‘ had made a deep Impression in his
 ‘ Mind, my Crimes are certain, but my Par-
 ‘ den is uncertain; nothing can be more
 ‘ uneasy to a Soul, that would be sav’d,
 ‘ than this Uncertainty. But yet, there’s
 ‘ nothing in the World of greater use for
 ‘ the

§. 2. *An Humble Heart.* 129

the acquiring and preserving of Humility. There's nothing can refrain us more from *Censuring* our Neighbours, or *Despising* even those who seem the greatest Sinners, than to think, that we our selves are far from having any certainty of being in the State of Grace; and that this very Moment we may be, for ought we know, in equal Danger of the everlasting Flames of Hell.

S E G T. III.

Second Degree of Humility.

THE Second Degree, is when we *love* to be neglected, and *desire* to be despis'd. As hard as it appears, if we were once well grounded in the First Degree, the Way would then be short and easie to the Second. If we had but once a mean *Opinion* of our selves; if once we truly *thought* our selves Contemptible; If once our *Judgment* were convinc'd, that we deserve to be despis'd by All the World; it would not then be difficult to *suffer* their Contempt: He then should even *wish* for such Occasions of improving our Humility: They would be always very welcome to us, and afford us every day, new Joy and Consolation. *Tu carmin,*

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says St. Bonaventure, that we naturally love to see our Sentiments approv'd, and our Opinion follow'd. Which if it be true, as our Experience too often teaches us, why are we so uneasy when we see our Neighbours undervalue us? 'Tis questionless, because we are not, in our Judgment, thoroughly convinc'd that we deserve to be despis'd; for if we were, we should be glad to see our Neighbours follow our Opinion.

The Dispositions which
Red. ch 14. make way to this Degree, are, 1. To shun as much as

may be, all Occasions of Praise. 2. To suffer patiently the Humours and Insults of others. 3. To take no Pleasure in our being celebrated and admir'd.

The avoiding all occasions of Praise, is recommended to us by the great Example of our Saviour, and the universal Practice of the Saints. Our Saviour fled from those who thought to chuse him King. He shew'd his Glory on Mount *Thabor*, to no more than three of his Disciples, and immediately charg'd them not to say a Word on't. Whensoever his great Charity appear'd in doing Miracles, his great Humility appear'd no less in his commanding Secrecy.

Humility

§. 3. *An Humble Heart.* 131

Humility affects not to appear in her own Likeness. *S. Fr. Sales.*
 She forbears Expressions. *P. 3. c. 5.*
 which discover her. She desires, not only to conceal all other Vertues, but particular, to conceal her self.

'Tis a dangerous thing to speak of ones self, either *P. Crasset.*
 well or ill; if well, 'tis to *T. 1. Mar.*
 appear *deserving*; if ill, 'tis *3. de l' A-*
 to appear *humble* *vent.*

An humble Man had rather hear another say, *That S. Fr. Sales;*
he is miserable, inconsiderable, *P. 3. c. 5.*
good for nothing, than be heard to say it of himself. At least, he never contradicts it. Whosoever says it, he *believes* it firmly, and is therefore glad that others are of his Opinion.

2. If we seriously consider'd, that the Esteem of *Rod. ch. 14.*
 Men, is generally, if not always, an Occasion of Presumption and Pride; and that the Saints themselves, who by God's Grace, were more secure from Danger, always fled from such Temptation, even with aversion and horror; we should certainly conclude, that whatsoever may contribute to the humbling of us, and inducing
 us.

132 *An Humble Heart* §. 3.

us to have a mean Opinion of our selves, should be receiv'd with patience, and embrac'd as useful means of purchasing, preserving, and encreasing our Humil ty. The Opportunities of pra-ctising this Vertue, are so frequent every Day, that if we did but carefully forecast to profit by them, we might almost make it our continual Exercise.

It happens, says the De-
B. III. ch. 49. 'vout Kempis, that what
 'is pleasing to others, shall go
 'well forward; that which thou wishest shall
 'not speed; that which others say, shall be
 'heard; what thou sayest, shall be nothing
 'regarded; others shall ask, and shall re-
 'ceive; thou shall ask, and not obtain;
 'others shall be great in the Praise of Men;
 'but of thee there shall be no Speech: To o-
 'thers, this or that shall be committed; but
 'thou shalt be accounted fit for nothing. At
 'this, Nature is apt sometimes to be troubled;
 'and 'tis much, if thou art humble enough,
 'to bear it patiently with silence.

3. 'To be charm'd so little
Ibid. 'with Esteem and Honour, as
 'to take no pleasure in them, is
 'a third Step to the Height of this De-
 'gree; much harder then the other two.
 'For as St. Austin very well observes,
Altho' it may be easie for a Man to live
with-

§. 3. *An Humble Heart.* 133

without Praise, when it is denied; is hard enough for any Man, to take no pleasure in it, when 'tis freely offer'd him. A Proud Man, says St. Gregory, rejoices even when he knows that his Admirers are mistaken in him. For he cares not what his Life is in the Sight of God, but only values the Appearance of it in the Sight of Men. And therefore he is puffed up with the least Applause: He jancies, he has reapt the Fruit of his Endeavours: He desires no more: He aims at nothing else. But, on the contrary, an humble Man is so Averse from the applause of Men, that he's uneasy with it. He's afraid, there is no real Ground for it; or else he fears the loss of his Reward in Heaven, by receiving of it here, and trembles at the apprehension of exchanging, for a little popular Esteem, the Crown of everlasting Glory, which he hopes for. Solomon says, Prov. 27. 21. *As Gold is tried by the Furnace, so is a Man by his Praise.* St. Gregory adds, If he grows vain by hearing it, he's like false Gold, which suffers by the Fire; but, if the hearing of it makes him tremble, least it may be prejudicial to his Soul before the Sovereign Judge; 'tis like a Fire which only serves to purify, and give him a new Lustre. We should be so grounded in the Knowledge of our selves, that

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when we are commended, we may always have before our Eyes our base Unworthiness; and be so much the more asham'd, to think, we are so far from being what we *seem* to be; that we fall short of being, even what we *should* be.

By these three Steps we come at last to the Degree, of *loving* and *desiring* to be undervalued and despis'd: We become, not only humble in our *Judgment*, but our *Heart*. The first Degree, which is Humility of *Judgment*, was not be found in J. C. as St. Bernard well observes; because he knew himself too well, to have a mean *Opinion* of himself, or *think* himself contemptible, or *judge*, that he deserv'd to be despis'd by all the World. But the second Degree, the true Humility of *Heart*, was the Humility of our Redeemer. He took pleasure in descending and becoming Man: He lov'd to be neglected, scorn'd and ridicul'd: He heartily *desir'd* to undergo all Injuries, Insults, and Outrages. Behold the Example of our Master. See the Lesson which he came to teach us, *Matth. 11. 29. Learn of me*, says he, *because I am humble of Heart.*

A

§. 3. *An Humble Heart.* 135

A true Disciple of Christ, is dead to all things in this World; he hates it, and detests it; he desires not to be valued and esteem'd in't; but embraces all Humiliations with the self-same Passion, which worldly Persons have for Honour and Esteem; and is as glad to meet with all occasions of appearing Inconsiderable and Contemprible, as they are *over-joy'd* to meet with Opportunities of seeming Great.

To know if we are true Disciples of our Master, and have perfectly acquired this Vertue; we must, by this Rule, examine well the Disposition of our Heart, and see if we rejoyce as much at being undervalued and despis'd, as others do at being honour'd and applauded.

This Examen is the Touchstone of Humility. For 'tis agreed upon by all, that Vertue is imperfect in us, till we practice it with satisfaction and pleasure. If we find the least repugnance in the Practice, when occasion serves, and use much preparation to surmount the Difficulty of it, 'tis indeed the way to acquire such Vertue; but it also is a certain

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' certain Mark, we have not yet acquir'd
 ' it in perfection. A Master of an Art,
 ' as *Aristotle* says, has such a Habit of it,
 ' that he uses no deliberation, but per-
 ' forms the Operations of it with such
 ' ease, he scarce knows what he's doing,
 ' when he does his Work. And Philoso-
 ' phers tell us, that in surprizing Acci-
 ' dents, we act not by Reflection, but by
 ' Habit. For which Reason, 'tis in vain
 ' to examine what our Inclinations are
 ' (and whether we are truly humble, or
 ' no,) by what we do with preparation
 ' and leisure: We must carefully Ex-
 ' amine what we suddenly are apt to do,
 ' without deliberation. *How*
 ' However, if by this Examen
 ' *Rodr.* we observe, that notwithstanding
 ' *ch. 17* our Endeavours to im-
 ' prove, we frequently are im-
 ' portun'd, and sometimes overcome by
 ' Pride and Vanity; if we are yet so far
 ' from taking pleasure in the practice of
 ' Humility, that we are hardly able to
 ' support in silence the Uneasiness we suf-
 ' fer in it. Let not this Discourage us; but
 ' on the contrary, the more we see our
 ' Weakness, let us humble us the more;
 ' and let us learn from thence, 'to use
 ' our utmost diligence, in laying a more
 ' firm Foundation of Christian Humili-
 ' ty,

§. 3. *An Humble Heart.* 137

ty, which is *Humility of Heart*. 'Tis not a thing impossible. For, by the Grace of God we may be able, says St. *Austin*, not only to imitate the Example of the Saints, but also of the Sovereign Master of the Saints. He invites us all to imitate his Vertue; and can we fancy, he invites us to a thing impossible? *Learn of me*, says he, *because I am humble of Heart*. And St. *Hierom* very well observes, that those Words of our Saviour, *Matth. 19. 21. If thou wilt be Perfect, come and follow me*, are a manifest Conviction that by his Grace, (which always is at hand,) we have it in our Power, to be Perfect, if we will.

SECT. IV.

An Objection Answered.

IF Charity incline us to desire our Neighbour's Good, *Rodr. ch. 29.* and to contribute what we can to their Salvation, why should our *Humility* desire, that all the World may undervalue us? Without their thinking well of us (in some capacity, or other,) we shall never do them any good; they never will confide in us, they will not hearken to us; we shall have no credit with them. Is't not therefore reasonable, even by the Rule of

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of common Charity that we should rather seek their Kindness and Esteem, than their Aversion and Contempt?

Ibid. 'St. Gregory answers: 'Tis one thing to desire our Neighbour's *Esteem*; another, to rejoyce at his *Profit*. 'Tis a Crime to covet Reputation for its own sake, and rejoyce at being Great in the opinion of Men. But yet, to wish as much of it as may be necessary for so good an End as that of serving Souls, and gaining them to Christ, is an effect of Charity. And thus, 'tis lawful to desire our Neighbour's good Opinion and Esteem, *so far* as may enable us to do them good; because we *thus* desire it only for their Service, and the greater Glory of our God, with a sincere and total disengagement from the Charms of Pride and Vanity. If any Man, who naturally *bates* a Potion, or a Pill, upon occasion procures it, and *desires* to take it; we may be assur'd, that such a Man takes Physick, not for Physick sake, but purely for his Health. So when a Man, who by an extraordinary Grace of the Almighty, *bates* the Applause and Honour of this World; when such a Man procures, *desires*, and manages with care the good Opinion of Men; because, it may be useful to him in their Service;

§. 4. *An Humble Heart.* 139

'vice; we may be assured, he only seeks
'God's Honour, not his own.

However, this great Truth
is generally much abus'd; *Ibid*
and under the Pretence of it,
we only cover the Ambition, and dis-
guise our Vanity. We covet Honours,
seek Preferments, and intrude our selves
into Employments, letting slip no oppor-
tunity of *being or appearing* Great; and
all this while, we plead, 'tis only *Cha-*
ri-ty, to qualify us for the better Service
of our Neighbours. 'We have there-
'fore need of no small circumspection to
'discern the Cheat. The Way to know
'it, says St. Gregory, is to examine all Oc-
'casions, where our Reputation is a thing
'indifferent, and *useless* to our Neighbour.
'If in these, we care not for the good
'Opinion of Men, we may suppose, that
'when we are concern'd for't, it is only
'for our Neighbour's sake, & not our own.

St. Gregory thus unties the
Knot; but St. Francis cuts it *Ibid.*
with more ease, and much
more clearly takes away the Difficulty.
'Whatsoever the *Occasions*
'are, He roundly answers; *Ibid.*
'that our *Charity* begins at
'Home; that if it inclines us to desire
'our Neighbour's spiritual Good; with
'much more reason, it inclines us to de-
'fire

'fire our Own; that if our Reputation
 'may be useful to our Neighbour; our
 'Disgraces and Humiliations (incurred
 'without our Fault) may prove more
 'beneficial to our selves. If when I
 'preach, *says he*, or when I practice any
 'Vertue, which is edifying, I am pleas'd
 'with Praises, which endanger my Sal-
 'vation; because their good Opinion
 'of me, helps them to improve by my
 'Instruction, and Example. How much
 'reason have I, for my own sake, to re-
 'joyce a great deal more, when (having
 'done my best) I still am undervalued
 'and despis'd; because, by this means,
 'I my self am more acceptable to God,
 'and more secure of my Eternal Happi-
 'ness?

Our Saviour himself;
See Rom. ch. 29. whose Charity inclin'd him
 to descend from Heaven, and
 to sacrifice his Life for Sin-
 ners; knew that many unbelieving Souls
 were lost by undervaluing and despi-
 sing him; He knew that many Millions
 of them would have been converted, if
 they had admir'd and honour'd him as
 he deserv'd; and yet, He never sought
 for worldly Honour, as a means to *save*
them; but altho' their Souls were dear
 to Him, his Honour was not. As He

§. 4. *An Humble Heart.* 141

came from Heaven, not to do his own Will, but the Will of him that sent him, Joh. 6. 38. So he came to seek the Honour of his Father, not his own, Joh. 8. 49. 50. I Honour my Father, says he: I seek not my own Glory. 'Tis enough, that whilst I only seek his Honour, he takes care of mine; and that altho' I never seek my own, yet there is one that always seeks and judges it, v. 50. and always will be sure to do me Justice. Let us follow the Example of our Saviour, let us make it the chief Business of our Life, to do the Will of him that sent us, not our own. Let us honour our Father in Heaven. Let his Honour only be the Object of our care, and never let us mind our own, but rest content, that he himself takes care of it. Let no appearance of our Neighbour's Profit, cheat us into an Ambition of being popular; but let us faithfully, in all things, do our Duty, for the Love and Honour of our God; and as for Mens Opinion of us, let us leave it to his Providence. His Honour here below, is left (as I may say) to our Discretion: He commits it to our Care: He forces not our Liberty, but only offers the Assistance of his Grace, and lets us Honour him, and serve him as we please. Shall God thus trust his Honour in so bad a Hand as ours? And shall not we be satisfied

rified, to trust our Honour in so good a Hand as his?

S E C T. V.

Third Degree of Humility.

THE Third and last Degree, is the *Humility of Saints*, who are most humble in the Sight of God, when they are most esteemed and celebrated by the World.

When a Person full of Faults and Imperfections, has a mean Opinion of himself; esteems himself no better than he is; and is content to be reputed such as he esteems himself; we may commend him, says *St. Bernard*; but have little Reason to admire him. Who admires to see a poor Man have a mean Opinion of his Riches? Think himself no richer than he is; and rest content, that others think so too: But if a Rich Man rank himself amongst the Poor, and treat them with respect, as if he were the least Considerable of them all; this very well deserves our Admiration.

By this Description of the third Degree, we plainly see, that the Humility of Saints, and the Humility of Sinners, is the same in Substance, tho' they differ

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§. 5. *An Humble Heart.* 143

differ in *Perfection*. 'Tis true; we wonder not, to see a Man stand steady upon even Ground. But when we see the same Man stand as firm upon a lofty Pinnacle, we gaze, and wonder at him. All this while, the Man's the same; tho' we admire him more, because the Place is higher, and the Difficulty greater. So 'tis in our present Case. Humility is either of the Judgment or the Heart. The third Degree is comprehended in the first, and second; but however, we admire much more an humble Saint; because his eminent degree of Sanctity is higher, and the difficulty of his being Humble, therefore seems much greater.

I say seems greater, because I am not apt to think it so, upon second thoughts. My Reason, in short, is this; Humility of Judgment and of Heart, are chiefly grounded in the Knowledge of our selves, and Love of God. The first induces us to have a mean Opinion of our selves; the more we know our selves, the more we think our selves contemptible, the more we judge that we deserve to be despis'd by all the World. The second makes us glad to be neglected, and desire to be contemned; and as the Love of God encreases in our Hearts, the more we hate and scorn the
tran-

144 *An Humble Heart.* §. 5.

transitory Honour of this World ; the more we love to follow the Example of an humble God, the more we heartily desire to be agreeable to none but him, as being every Day more sensible of this great Truth ; he only *is approved whom God commends*, 2 Cor. 10. 18.

Let us only lay these Notions right together. 1. The Knowledge of our selves and Love of God, is, that which makes Men Saints. No Person ever was a Saint without them ; no Man ever was a Sinner with them : And the more this Knowledge and this Love encrease, the greater is the Sanctity. 2. This Knowledge and this Love, is that which makes Men humble ; Knowledge helps them to be humble in their *Judgments* ; Love assists them to be humble in their Hearts : The more they know and Love, the greater is the Assistance of God's Grace, which is the only means of making all things easie to us. Why, then may we not conclude ? Whoever is a Saint, the greater Saint he is, the easier 'tis for him to be humble.

Sinners indeed, have much more matter for Humility to work upon. Their Weakness, their Corruption, and the Misery of their deplorable Condition, are incomparably worse. But, which

is

§. 5. *An Humble Heart.* 145

is worst of all, they are so miserably blind, as not to know their Misery. A Beggar, in his Drink, imagines he's a Prince, and is as proud as if he were. 'Tis true, he's miserably poor, but since he knows it not, what signifies it? He's as proud as if he were the richest Man alive. 'Tis so with Sinners. They are drunk with Self-Love, Pride and Vanity. They little know, and much less think, how Poor, how Miserable, how Contemptible they are. And we may very well apply to them those Words of the *Apocalypse*, Chap. 3. 17, 18. *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and need of nothing; and knowest not, that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: Therefore I counsel thee, to anoint thy Eyes, that thou mayest see.* This is the general Reason, why Humility is harder to be found in Sinners than in Saints. The First have more to humble them; but the more they have, the blinder they are, and the less they know it. The Second have less to humble them; but the less they have, the more their Eyes are open by God's Grace, and the more clearly they discover what's enough to make them fear and tremble all their Life.

S E C T. VI.

First Reason, why the greatest Saints are the most humble.

I Shall only add two Reasons more, because all Saints (I speak of such as are now living,) are compriz'd in these two Classes: They are either such as have been Sinners heretofore, or such as may be so hereafter.

The first Reason is so universal, that it comprehends them both; but more particularly, those who have preserv'd the Innocence of their Baptismal Grace. 'Tis gathered from that Oracle of Scripture, *Work out your Salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you to will and to do, according to his pleasure, Phil. 2. 12. 13.* See the unfearchable Abyfs of the Almighty's Judgments! where 'tis dangerous to dwell too long, and search too curiously, least it cast us into an excess of fear. 'Tis enough, that none are saved, but who persevere to the end; and that the greatest Saints can never be assured of their Perseverance. 'Tis a special Gift which the Apostle chiefly points at, when he says, *Rom. 9. 18, 16. God has mercy on whom he will have mercy.* It is not

§. 6. *An Humble Heart.* 147

' not of him that wills, or him that runs ;
 ' but of God that shews mercy ; and again,
 ' Eph. 2. 8, 9. By Grace you are saved ; and
 ' that not of your Selves ; it is the Gift
 ' of God ; not of Works, lest any Man should
 ' boast Alas ! how is it possible for any
 ' Saint to be assured of his condition for
 ' the future, since he is not certain even
 ' of his present State ? Who can sound
 ' the bottom of our Hearts ? Or rather,
 ' who can sound the Heart of God, and
 ' tell us, what he thinks of our condition ?
 ' Who is he, that can assure us, we are,
 ' good enough to be rewarded by him ?
 ' Woe be to that Life, how innocent soever,
 ' says St. Austin, which he Judges without
 ' Mercy, Psal. 19. 12. Who is he, says Da-
 ' vid, that can understand his Failings ?
 ' Cleanse me from my secret faults, O Lord,
 ' Psal. 143. 2. and enter not into judgment
 ' with thy Servant ; for in thy sight shall no
 ' Man living be justified ; if once Thou
 ' judgest him according to the utmost ri-
 ' gour of thy Justice. Who is there that
 ' does not tremble, when he hears the
 ' Just and Holy Man, whom God him-
 ' self was pleased to praise, confess, that
 ' all his Life Time, God was such a Ter-
 ' rour to him, he was hardly able to en-
 ' dure it ? Job 31. 23. Who can, without
 ' trembling, hear the Prophet *Isaiah* tell

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‘ us, 64. 6. *we are all unclean ; and all our
‘ righteous works, like filthy Rags ? Or hear
‘ S. Hierom, in the Life of S. Hilarion, tell
‘ us, how that blessed Saint was terrifi-
‘ ed at the approach of Death ; and to
‘ encourage his departing Soul, said to
‘ himself, Go forth my Soul ; what art thou
‘ now afraid of ? Thou hast served thy God
‘ these threescore and ten years ; and dost
‘ thou tremble now to appear before him ?*

Let us therefore *fear and tremble* in the way to Heaven. Never let us fancy, we are so advanc’d in Vertue, that we need not *fear*. The greatest Saints were never so *Presumptuous*, as to banish from their thoughts the *Fear of God*, *Phil. 2. 12. They work’d out their Salvation with Fear and Trembling.* They were always full of *Fear* ; and this *Fear* always *Humbled* them. They were not *Blinded* as we are, with *Passion and Humour* ; but, as they improv’d in *Grace*, they every day discover’d more and more their secret Imperfections.

The Property of *Grace* is to enlighten the understanding, as well as to enflame the Heart. It makes us *know* our *Misery*, and *Love* our God, who only can deliver us. These two Effects of *Grace* were lively represented on the Day of *Pentecost*, by that mysterious Fire which rested on the Heads of the Apostles.

Fire

§. 6. *An Humble Heart.* 149

Fire gives Light and Heat; and as the Fire encreases, it affords more *Heat* and greater *Light*. So, Grace *Enlightens* and *Enflames* the *Minds* and *Hearts* of Saints, with *Knowledge* of themselves, and *Love* of God; and as their Grace improves, this *Heat* and *Light* encreases: They discern more *clearly* the innumerable dangers that surround them; and become more *Humble* under the *Almighty Hand* of God, 1 Pet. 5. 6.

S. Paul. compares the different States of *Sin* and *Grace*, to *Light* and *Darkness*, *Night* and *Day*, Rom. 13. 12, 13. *The Night*, says he, *is spent*; *the Day is at Hand*. Let us cast off the *Works of Darkness*, and put on the *Armour of Light*. Let us walk *honestly*, as in the *Day*. A Traveller benighted, walks he knows not where. He hardly sees his *Hand*; much less his *Feet*. He sees perhaps, some *Stars* shine through the *Clouds*, whose sparkling *Light* serves only to amuse him, and mislead him to a *Precipice*. But, when the *Rising Sun* appears, the *Stars* immediately vanish out of sight; our Traveller no longer gazes there, but has a much more useful *Prospect* of the *Earth* below him; where he plainly sees the *Ground* he goes upon, the *Risings*, the *Descents*, the *Irregularities*, and *Precipices* of it. Sinners, like

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benighted Travellers march blindly on; mind little what they *Do*; and much less where they *Go*. However, now and then they practise some good *Actions*, either out of custom, or good nature; and amuse themselves with some few semblances of Vertue, whose dim lustre seems perhaps, more *sparkling* in the *Darkness* of that *Night*, which hides them even from themselves. But, 'tis not so with Saints. Their *Night is spent*; their *Day* appears. The Sun of Justice *Rises in their Hearts*, 2 Pet. i. 19. Their *Vertues*, like the *Stars*, (which only shine in *Darkness*;) disappear immediately. The Clay which they are made of, the Corruption of their Nature, the Enormity of Sin, the Power of their Passions, and the Weakness of their Reason: These are Motives of Humility, which *Now* they *clearly* see, and *daily* have before their Eyes. Besides all this, they plainly see an infinite variety of Artifices and Disguises of Self-Love, which easily assumes all shapes, and counterfeits all Vertues, even Charity it self. And therefore they suspect the best of all their *Actions*, trembling at the very thought of them, for fear they may be secretly corrupted by Self-love. But, above all, the importunity of Pride, which never ceases
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to attack them; but continually endeavours to surprize them, (notwithstanding all these Motives of Humility,) is, that which seems the most *extravagant* of all their *faults*, and humbles them the most.

Behold the Misery of Man! And, what can be more miserable, if the Sight of so much misery suffices not to humble him! The greatest Saint, who is not conscious to himself of any forfeiture of his first Innocence, has no Assurance of his being justified. He may be in the State of Grace; but whether so, or not, He cannot tell. And, which is worse, altho' he knew it, He has no Assurance of *Persevering* one single moment. He who stands, may fall; and He who is a Saint, may prove a Sinner. Nothing but God's Grace is able to support him, to the end; and the continuance of this Grace, requires so faithful and so punctual a Co-operation with it, that a very small Omission oftentimes suffices to deprive him of it. His Perseverance is, as it were, a Chain of Graces, link'd together, and continued to the utmost period of his Life; and this is more than he can Merit. All that he can do, is to be always *vigilant*

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and faithful in the Use of
S. Tho. 1. 2. every single Grace God
 9. 114. 9. offers him. One Grace,
 well us'd, draws on ano-
 ther; this a third, and that a fourth:
 But, if he trip the least in his Fidelity,
 the Chain immediately breaks. And
 this is that great *Diligence*, which the
 Apostle recommends so earnestly to all
 good Christians; *Use Diligence*, says he,
to make your Calling and Election sure,
 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. *For if you do, you shall never*
fall. I must confess, this Saying is ex-
 tremely comfortable; if we do: But, if
 we do not, what becomes of us? If all our
 Life, we use such *Diligence*, the Apostle
 tells us, we shall never fall: But, if we do
 not, what remains, but that the greatest
 Saint amongst us will be sure to fall?
 Consider this, and tremble, whoso'er
 you are: Assure your self, the more you
 are a Saint, the more you'll tremble, and
 the more you'll see, how terrible a Truth
 this is; which is one Reason why the
 greatest Saints (who are the most con-
 vinc'd of it) are always the most Humble.

S E C T. VII.

*Second Reason why the greatest Saints are
 the most humble.*

I Have said enough of Saints, who have
 preserv'd their Innocence. The Se-
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cond Reason only has regard to Saints, who by their Crimes, have lost it heretofore ; and now are truly Penitent. If They who *Know themselves* the best, are therefore the most Humble, because they *Doubt* the most of their *Perseverance*. Surely, those who *Know* most clearly the *Enormity of Sin*, which they are guilty of, have much more Reason to be Humble, because they *Doubt* much more of their obtaining Pardon.

There is a great Difference, says St. Jerome, *betwixt a* Epist. ad Man *whose Vessel is entire,* Salv. *and richly laden, when he sails into the Port of Bliss ; and him who after Shipwrack, after Swimming for his Life, rides naked on a Plank ; and after being dashed a hundred times against the Rocks, at length is cast upon the Sands, half dead, and almost bruis'd to pieces.* If a Man, who sails in a sound Vessel, never is secure from Storms which may arise, but always doubts of his arrival at the Port ; we may be sure, his Case is much more doubtful, and more terrible, who has already suffered Shipwrack, and has nothing left him, but a single Plank to bear him up.

'Tis true ; it happens now and then (and 'tis a comfortable Observation of a holy Man, whose Name is famous in

our present Age :) ' *It*
Abbe Jean. ' happens now and then,
Entretien. 7. ' that he, to whom the Winds
' and Sea obey, *Matth. 8. 27.*
' is pleased to make them for a time, to
' calm and quiet, that a Man who swims
' upon his Plank with industry and
' courage, meets at length by Provi-
' dence, another Vessel, better than his
' own; and sails with much more com-
' fort, much more joy, into the Haven,
' than he would have done, if he had ne-
' ver suffered Shipwrack in Storm. *St.*
' *John Climacus,* in his 15th Degree, in-
' quires, Which of the two is greater in the
' Sight of God; he who died by Sin, and rose
' again to Life by Grace? Or, he who never
' died the spiritual Death of Sin? And an-
' swers, that whoever thinks the Innocent
' more happy of the two, is much mistaken.
' The Reason is, because all Sanctity is
' founded in Humility and Charity. Who-
' ever Loves God best, and is most Hum-
' ble, is the greatest Saint. It happens
' oftentimes, that He to whom a little is
' forgiven, loves but little, *Luke 7. 47.* and
' it happens now and then, that he loves
' best, who is most mercifully pardon'd,
' and forgiven most, *v. 43.* We read in
' Scripture several Examples of this na-
' ture. *Zachary,* as soon as he had done
' suffi-

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‘ sufficient Penance for his Incredulity,
‘ immediately had his Speech restor’d
‘ him; and not only that, but he was
‘ also honour’d with the Gift of Pro-
‘ phecy; which we do not read he
‘ had before. The *Prodigal* receiv’d much
‘ greater Favours and Caresses from his
‘ Father, than he ever had experienc’d
‘ before he left him. *Lazarus* himself,
‘ (who was the *Figure* of great Sinners,)
‘ never had the Honour to be entertain’d
‘ at Table, with the Son of God, before
‘ he was, by Miracle, rais’d from the
‘ Grave. *St. Peter* had not Confidence,
‘ before he sinn’d, to ask our Saviour,
‘ Who he was that would betray him?
‘ But, when he had wash’d away his Sins
‘ with Tears, he was permitted to be
‘ more familiar with his Master, and
‘ was made the Sovereign Pastor of his
‘ Church. From whence ’tis easie to
‘ conclude, that Sinners may sometimes by
‘ Penance, grow more *Perfect* than those
‘ Saints, who having kept their Inno-
‘ cence, love God less fervently, and serve
‘ him with more Coldness and Indiffe-
‘ rence. Behold, says *St. Ambrose*, the great
‘ Goodness of our God! How liberal and ge-
‘ nerous he is, to whom he pleases to be merci-
‘ ful! He’s not contented to restore what they
‘ have lost. He grants them over and above,
‘ such

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' such Graces, and such Favours, as they ne-
 ' ver durst have hop'd for. Thus as the A-
 ' postle says, *Rom. 5. 20. where Sin abound-*
 ' *ed, Grace abounds much more;* because the
 ' more Sin humbles them, the more they
 ' are exalted. When a Penitent, whom
 ' Sin had blinded, once begins to see,
 ' and to discover *clearly* the Enormity of
 ' his Offences, he has much more reason
 ' to be humble all his Life, than if he
 ' had been always innocent. He looks
 ' upon himself no better than a Crimi-
 ' nal repriev'd, who is upon his good
 ' Behaviour of his Pardon; and per-
 ' suades himself, that he can never give
 ' sufficient Proof of his Fidelity, and the
 ' Sincerity of his Repentance. All his
 ' Exercises of continual Penance never
 ' make him vain; but only serve to
 ' humble him the more; because he
 ' looks upon them, only as the Remedies
 ' of his Diseases; and such Remedies as
 ' he must use till Death; which is the
 ' only End he hopes to see of his Dis-
 ' tempers. The Employment of his
 ' Thoughts, is the Consideration of his
 ' grievous Sins, which he perpetually
 ' laments; where-e'er he goes, he never
 ' leaves the doleful Memory behind him,
 ' *Mich. 6. 15. His Humiliation is always in*
 ' *the midst of him.* Since therefore, he
 ' who

7. §. 7. *An Humble Heart.* 157

‘ who hates the Proud, Gives Grace to the
 ‘ *Humble*, 1 Pet. 5. 5. Is’t not lawful to
 ‘ infer, that Sinners may *sometimes* ar-
 ‘ rive to a more eminent degree of San-
 ‘ ctity, than many of those Saints, who
 ‘ never *fell* quite down, but yet *walk*
 ‘ *slowly* in the Way to Heaven ?

This happens, *now and then*, ’tis true ;
 but such Examples are as *rare*, as they
 are *great*. They are Effects of more
 than ordinary Grace, which God grants
 only *when and where* he pleases. S. Peter
 never would have *wept* so *bitterly*, if Je-
 sus had not mercifully *turn’d* and *look’d*
 upon him, Luke 22. 61, 62. Lazarus had
 never risen from the Grave, if Jesus had
 not come himself, and call’d him forth
 with a loud Voice, Jo. 11. 43. The Prodi-
 gal had never come back to his Father, if
 he had not first *come to himself*, Luke 15.
 17. Alas, poor Wretch ! he follow’d
 Swine before ; and if he might *have fil-*
led his Belly with their Husks, v. 16. he
 would have been contented. See the
 Blindness of a Sinner ! But, as soon as
 ever he *came to himself*, v. 17. his Eyes
 were open ; and the opening of his Eyes
 was that which brought him to himself.
 He saw the great Enormity of his Of-
 fences, v. 18. *I have sinn’d*, says he, *I have*
sinn’d against Heaven, v. 19. and before my
 Father’s

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Father's Face; *I am not worthy to be call'd his Son.* The Idea of his Sins was now so terrible, and made so deep Impression in him, that it humbled him, not only in his *Judgment*, but his *Heart*. It humbled him so much, that he not only *thought* himself unworthy, but *desir'd* to be receiv'd accordingly; and begg'd his Father not to entertain him as a *Son*, but as *one of his hired Servants*, v. 19.

When once the Grace of God enlightens us, and by a Miracle of Mercy, breaks through the impenetrable Darkness which our Passions cloud our Reason with; this *Light* discovers clearly to us the Enormity of Sin; and, as this Light encreases, we discover daily more and more. This Light is followed with a sacred *Heat*, that softens the obdurate Coldness of our Temper, by which means, the terrible Idea of our Guilt makes every Day, a deeper and more sensible *Impression* in our Hearts. And this is the Second Reason, why the Greatest Saints are the most humble; because, the greater Saints they are, the more They *see* the great Enormity of Sin; the more They *feel* the Terrour of their Guilt, the more They *doubt* of their obtaining *Pardon*; and the more They *fear* and *tremble* all their Life.

I.

The Enormity of Sin.

THE humble Penitent, whose Words I lately cited, thus describes his coming to himself. ' Whilst I pursued, says he, the *Entretien*. 7. ' wandering Errors of my ' Heart, I drunk Iniquity like Water, Job ' 15. 16. And not only that, but was so ' hardned and so blind, that whatsoe're ' I read, or heard of Sin, made no Im- ' pression; and instead of working my ' Conversion, only serv'd to render me ' more Guilty, and more Inexcusable. ' At length, the happy Time arriv'd, in ' which it pleas'd the *Father of all Mer-* ' *cies*, 1 Cor. 1. 3. and the *God of all our* ' *Comfort*, to bestow a favourable look up- ' on me; and the first Glance presently ' dispers'd the Darkness of my Soul, the ' very Dawning of that Light discover'd ' to me the Infernal Monster, in whose ' Company, I had so long liv'd uncon- ' cern'd. I saw, and was immediately ' seiz'd with so prodigious *Fear* and ' *Trembling* at the Sight, that I am con- ' fident, as long as I have Breath to Live, ' I never shall recover it.

S. *Isidore of Damiette*, describes this Monster in surprizing *Ibid.* Terms :

Terms : Some think, says he, that the Devil was the Father of Sin : And others on the contrary maintain, that Sin was the Father of the Devil. Be it how you please, says he, I leave you to imagine, either what a Father it must be of such a Son ; or, what a Son we may expect of such a Father. This, I must confess, is black enough. But all it's Blackness only serves to leave us in the Dark. We are not yet, one jot the nigher, knowing what Sins is. And all that we can gather from it, is that we are never like to have it painted to the Life, unless an *Angel* undertake to draw it, and the *Devil* sit for the Picture.

The Philosopher was in the right of it, when being ask'd the question, *what God is ?* He took a Day, then two, then three ; and after all, ingeniously confess'd, the more he thought of it, the more he found himself unable to express it. If a Man should ask me the like question, *What a Sinner is ?* I should not be asham'd to own, I am not able to describe the one, no more than he was to express the other.

If God be the Supreme and Sovereign Good, if *with him* all things else are good, if nothing else be good *without him* ; we may in proportion, say the same of Sin. 'Tis the Supreme and Sovereign Evil.

All

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All things else are evil *with it* ; nothing else is *so* to us *without it*.

If it be true, that All good comes from God, as from the First and Universal Cause of All ; the same is true of *Sin*, which is the First and Universal Root of all our Evils. God made Heaven ; *Sin* made Hell. He made the Earth ; *Sin* made it miserable. He created Angels in his Paradise *above* ; *Sin* threw them *down*. He created Man and Woman in our Paradise *below* ; and *Sin* immediately cast them *out*.

Consider all the Torments of the Damn'd, the cruel Pains of those Eternal Flames, the never ceasing Anguishes of their despairing Rage, &c. *All This*, and *More* than All that you are able to conceive, is only Part of the Effects of *Sin*. 'Twas *Sin* prepar'd *All* this, and *More* than this, for Them and Us.

If what you only know by *Faith*, make no impression ; if you are more sensible of what we suffer *here*, than what they suffer *there* : Consider the Revolt of all the Elements against us. Fire which once was only made to serve us, *now* becomes the fatal Instrument, our angry God makes use of, to destroy and punish us : The very Air we breathe, infects us with Diseases ; and the Earth we walk on,

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trembles, opens, buries us alive. All this had never been, if Man had never Sinn'd.

Consider all the Miseries, which Famine, Plague and War, involve us in; the Poverty of half the World, with all the Hunger, Thirst, Cold, Sickness and Despair, which follow it: And after all, the Civil War of Passion against Reason; which, if well examin'd, will be found the Greatest and most Painful of our Miseries; from whence proceed our Ignorance and Malice; and from thence all Immoralities, Corruptions, and Scandals, which we meet with in the World. All this had never been, if Man had never Sinn'd.

Consider all the sad Disasters, you or yours have met with; all the Losses you have suffer'd in your Family, Estate or Friends; and all the Crosses you have born with so much Pain; whatever you have undergone, you never had been subject to, your Heart had never ask'd, if Man had never Sinn'd. Accursed Sin! the only first Beginning, and first Cause of all our Mischiefs, both in this World and the next!

My God! if once we *saw Thee as Thou art*, 1 Jo. 3. 2. We could not possibly be tepid and indifferent; the very *Sight* of
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so much Goodness, would, in spite of all our Passions, force us to Admire, Adore, and Love Thee *above all* the World. Accursed Sin! if once we could but see Thee *as Thou art*, the very sight of so much Malice would not suffer us to Love Thee any longer; it would be impossible for either World, or Flesh, or Devil, to prevail against us; we should Hate Thee *above all things*; we should then abhor, detest, abominate Thee evermore. Accursed Sinner! Such Goodness, and Thou not Love it! Such Malice, and Thou not Hate it!

If the Eternal Source of all our Good be infinite in Goodness, What's the First and Everlasting Root of all our Evils? Is't not infinite Malice? Questionless it is. Besides, God is not only infinite in Goodness; He is infinite in Wisdom, infinite in Justice, infinite in all Perfections whatsoever. So is Sin. It is not only infinite in Malice; it is also infinite in Folly, infinite in all the Notions we can frame of it. The Treachery, Disloyalty, Impiety, Ingratitude, Presumption, Pride, and Insolence: All This, and more than all that we can think of, All is infinite.

According to the Principle which I have here laid down, if any Man should ask

ask me, *what a Sinner is?* I should not know what other Name to give him: **SINNER** is his only Name: And I can think of nothing like *Him*, but the Man related in *S. Mark*, Ch. 5. 2. *He is possess'd with an Unclean Spirit*, possess'd with the Devil; and which is worse, possess'd with *Sin*, the Father of the Devil. He is so unruly in his Passions, Inclinations and Humours, that *No Man can bind Him*, v. 3. *No, not Chains*. The Laws of God are his *Fetters*; but these *He breaks in pieces*, v. 4. *neither is it possible for any Man to tame Him*. If you ask his *Name*, the Gospel says, 'tis *Legion*, v. 9. because *He is many*. *Sin* and *Sinner*, are two Names, like that of *Legion*: Every Mortal Sin, is *many* Sins; and every Sinner, is as *many* Sinners. 'Tis impossible to number all the Aggravations of a Mortal Sin: They are as numberless as the Perfections of our offended God: And therefore I shall only mention those which are the most Notorious, the most Obvious to common Sense, and such as are most Odious betwixt Man and Man.

A Sinner! Every Sinner is in every mortal Sin, not only guilty of *one* Crime, but of a *Legion* of Crimes; an *Ungrateful* Villain, who betrays his Benefactor; a *Presumptuous* Slave, who Abuses his Deliverer;

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liverer ; a *Proud* Servant, who Despises his Master ; an *Insolent* Criminal, who Offends before his Judge's Face. All these are Crimes we have a Horrour of, when we observe them only betwixt Fellow-creatures, betwixt Man and Man. All these are *infinitely* Greater, betwixt Man and God. And every Mortal Sin, includes the utmost Aggravations of them all.

II.

The great Ingratitude, Presumption, Pride, and Insolence, &c.

AN ungrateful *Villain*. An Upstart, rais'd from less than Dust. An empty Thing, extracted out of Nothing. That such a *Thing* as this, and so exalted as it is, should be so stupid, so insensible of all his Obligations, so unmindful of the Favours he receives, and so ill-natur'd to his greatest Benefactor ; who continually *makes* him all *he is*, who daily *gives* him all *he has*, to whom he owes the Bread he eats, the Air he breathes, the Ground he goes upon, the Hand he moves, the very Life he spends in Sin, and all the Time allow'd him to repent ! Can such a Creature, so oblig'd by such a *Benefactor*, be so basely and so horribly ungrateful, to betray Him, and prefer be-
fore

fore Him the unreasonable satisfaction, of a silly Humour, of a shameful Passion, of a sinful Inclination? Open (once for all) thy Eyes, Blind Sinner; and confess, that no *Ingratitude*, but that of *Judas*, can compare to thine.

A *Slave*, (I wish he were so, to his Master;) A Slave to Passion and Humour; A Slave to Sin and Misery; A Slave condemn'd to worse than Gallies, during Life; and afterwards to the Eternal Flames of Hell, where *neither Eye has seen, nor Ear has heard; nor has it ever entered into the Heart of any Man*, 1 Cor. 2. 9. what Torments God's great Justice *has prepar'd for those who dare abuse his Mercy*. A vile Slave, *deliver'd* from the mischief of *all* This, by God himself, descending from his Glory, living here a poor and painful Life, and laying down the same with every drop of his most precious Blood, to pay the ransom of this Wretch: That such a Slave, deliver'd so, by such a Hand, should offer to abuse the Mercy which *once sav'd* him, and *still* holds him by a slender thread, from falling into everlasting Misery!

A *Servant*, I should have said, a miserable Insect, full of sinful Putrefaction, a vile Spawn of Man's original Corruption, a Worm, whose very Crawling on
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its Fellow-dust, is more Preferment than it can deserve. That such a Thing as This, should be so proud, as to despise the *Master* of the World ! So *Great*, so *Wise*, so *Infinitely Perfect*, and so every way *Deserving* as He is ! This Vermin has indeed a *Soul* ; an *Angel* once by *Grace*, but now by *Sin*, a *Devil*, black as *Hell* it self ; a *Lucifer* that will be *knowing Good and Evil*, Gen. 3. 5. will be like the *Highest*, Isa. 14. 14. will pretend to *Govern* in his *Master's House*, *despise* his *Orders*, *slight* his *Menaces*, *neglect* his *Admonitions*. *Be astonish'd, O ye Heavens, at this*, Jer. 2. 12.

A most insolent *Criminal* ; a *Criminal* so *insolent*, as to offend before *God's Face* ; in presence of his *General*, his *King*, his *Father*, his *Deliverer*, his *Benefactor*, and his *Master* ; and besides all this, in presence of his *Judge*, before the very *Bar*, where he continually is upon his *Tryal* for his everlasting *Life or Death*. Our *Saviour* says, *Joh. 3. 18. That whosoever believes not, is condemn'd already*. We may say the same of every *Sinner* : In the very moment he offends, *He is condemn'd already*. His *All-seeing Judge* is always *Witness* of his *Thoughts*, *Words*, *Actions* and *Desires* ; and He no sooner is a *Criminal*, but he is *Try'd* and *Judg'd*.

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This *Insolence* of his, in some respect, exceeds all other Aggravations of his Crime. 'Tis an Extravagance of which we hardly find the least Example betwixt Man and Man. We often hear of Soldiers that desert: But whensoever they go, they steal away; we never hear, that they acquaint their General with such Designs. We often hear of Subjects that conspire against the Government; but never hear them talk such Matters loudly, in the hearing of their Prince. We often hear of Murders, Robberies, and many other Outrages, committed in the World: But when the Prisoner once was brought to Tryal, did you ever hear, He either robb'd, or murder'd, at the Bar? No, no, such Insolence was never heard of, betwixt Man and Man. And, yet this very *Insolence* is infinitely less than *Ours*, which we are always guilty of, in every mortal Sin.

I say no more. I tremble at the very thought of having said so much, when I reflect, how All that we can either say or think, will ne'er convert us without *Grace*. There's nothing but the Grace of God can make a deep *Impression* of it in our Hearts.

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III.

Our Saviour's Idea of Sin, and the Impres-
sion it made upon him.

OUR Saviour Jesus Christ best knew the great *Enormity* of Sin; and we may judge how great it is, by the *Impres-*
sion which it made upon him; when the approaching Hour of his Passion, laid before his Eyes the terrible *Idea* of it.

'Twas the first bloody Scene of all his Sufferings. *He began to be sorrowful and very heavy*, Matth. 26. 37. A Deluge of Grief broke in upon his Soul, quite overwhelm'd his Heart, and lay so heavy upon his fearful Thoughts, he was not able to conceal it any longer, and support the pressing Weight of his Affliction, all alone, in silence. His three most dear and most familiar Disciples, were surpriz'd so much, to see this sudden Alteration in their dearest Lord; they were not able to enquire the Cause, but like Job's three Friends, they stood astonish'd, and spake not one Word to him, *because they saw his Grief was very great*, Job 2. 13.

Our Saviour could hold no longer, but broke out into this doleful Expression, Matth. 26. 38. *My Soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death.* Ah my dear Disciples! if you knew, as well as I do, all the Motives of my Grief, you would

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not

not wonder, that the very Thought of them makes me look pale, and shews you the Face of Death in my Countenance. The violent Pangs of my afflicted Soul, are so sharp and piercing, that, did not my Divinity support me, and preserve my Life, I should immediately, this very moment, die upon the Place, *Mat. 26. 38. Stay a while, and watch with me.* You, who love me best, who have been always most familiar with me, be not *now* so unkind as to leave me in this sad Condition all alone: *Stay a while, and watch with me,* till my Storm of Grief blow over.

Dear Christians, let us stay a while, and with these three Disciples, not only admire, but search into the Cause of this great Alteration in the Soul of our Redeemer. How was it possible that *now* he should begin to fear so much that Death, which all his Life he had so much desir'd? His Love for Man, and his Desire of Dying for us, were conceiv'd by the Operation of the Holy Ghost; they came into the World with him, and ever after so employ'd his Thoughts, he scarce could talk of any thing else. Amongst his Disciples, his common Discourse was of his *Sufferings*, the Cup he was to drink, his *Obligation*, his *Readiness*, his *Impatience*, to fulfil the
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Prophecies, *Luke 12. 50. I have, says he, a Baptism to be baptiz'd with, and how am I straitned, till it be accomplish'd?* When the Time drew nearer, he redoubled his Desires of Dying for us, *Luke 22. 15. With Desire I have desir'd to eat this Passover with you.* And why? says *St. Chrysostom,* 'Because it is a Preparation to my Passion, which I have so long, so earnestly desir'd. He knew, from the Beginning, every Torment, every Degree of it: Often reflected on each Circumstance apart, and as often took delight in viewing all of them together. Upon Mount *Thabor*, when the Glory of his blessed Soul shin'd through his Body, like the Sun thro' a transparent Cloud, upon the dazled Eyes of his Disciples, giving them a Glimpse of the Eternal Glory we expect hereafter: Our Saviour seem'd to be as much delighted with the Prospect of his Passion, as with all the Joys of Heaven: And as upon another Occasion, when *his Disciples pray'd him to eat, John 4. 31, 34.* He told them, *My Meat is to do the Will of him that sent me, and finish his Work;* so when they desir'd him to stay, and make *Tabernacles, Luke 9. 30, 33.* it was his Joy and Delight, to talk with *Moses and Elias of his Decease, his Passion, which he should accomplish, at Hierusalem, ver. 31.*

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Ah Christians! you have Reason to admire, and wonder, that the God of *all* your Comfort, 2 Cor. 1. 3. is now heavy and disconsolate: But you will *fear* and *tremble*, more than wonder, if you seriously reflect, that all his Grief proceeded chiefly from the terrible *Idea* which he had of *Sin*; not *his*, but *ours*. St. Hierom says, His greatest Grief *Apud D.* proceeded not from fear of *Suffering*, because He came to suffer: But He chiefly griev'd for Judas, for the Scandal of the Apostles, and the Reprobation of the People, &c.

This agrees exactly with our Saviour's Words, Luke 23. 27, 28. to those who follow'd him to Calvary; when turning to the Women who lamented Him, he said, *Daughters of Hierusalem, weep not for me only, weep also for your selves, and for your Children.* Weep not for me; my Torments will be short; weep for your selves; your Torments (if you do not weep, repent, and mend,) will be eternal. Alas! the Torments which I willingly and freely suffer for your sake, are Nothing to the Pains of Hell, which you for ever will endure, unless by penitential Tears, mixt with my Blood, you wash away your Sins, ver. 31. *If they do thus, in the green wood, what will they do in the dry?* If I, tho' innocent, suffer thus
for

III. *An Humble Heart.* 173

for your Sins; you, who are Guilty, what are you like to suffer for your own? If I, who am true God, the only beloved Son of my eternal Father, who never once offended Him; if, because, I interpose betwixt you and his Justice, I am thus severely treated; what will become of miserable Creatures, grievous Sinners, who so often have offended him, if they do not join their Tears with mine; if they are not afflicted with me for their Sins, for which I die upon the Cross? *Every Soul who upon this day is not afflicted, shall perish, Lev. 23. 29. Every Soul who thinks upon this Day, and is not afflicted with his dying Saviour, is not heartily afflicted for those Sins, for which he dies, shall certainly perish.*

Neither does it contradict, what commonly is said, that one great Difference betwixt our Saviour and his Martyrs was, that by a Miracle of Grace, he gave them that undaunted Courage, which by a greater Miracle he now refus'd to himself. 'Tis true, he freely suffer'd in himself the *Natural* Fear of Death; to shew himself True Man as well as God; to let us see at once, the Weakness of our Nature, and the Power of Grace; and comfort us, by making it appear, that such *Infirmities of*

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Natura are not Sins, as long as *Reason* governs them, and *Resignation* submits to the Will of God. But yet, there is another great Difference betwixt his Case and theirs. Martyrs, who die for God's sake, are secure of their Success; they are sure not to suffer in vain, they are certain to possess all that they desire, and to enjoy eternally their God, to whom they sacrifice their Lives. This is the Reason, why our Martyrs look Death boldly in the Face; with open Arms receive it, and go to meet it with the same assurance, as if they went to Heaven. Let the Body suffer all the worst of Pains, the Soul

Anima de Deo is unconcern'd, the Soul
suo semper se- is secure of God, the Soul
cura. St. Cypr. is in Heaven beforehand.

When Man dies to enjoy God, he is sure, he shall enjoy him. But (alas!) it is not so, when Jesus dies for Man. He dies to gain his Love; and at the same time knows, that he will prove ungrateful. He dies to enjoy him in Heaven, and foresees he will be damn'd for all eternity. The lively Apprehension of his Torments altogether, was enough to make him *Sorrowful, even to Death*; but however, if he could have promis'd himself the Eternal Sal-

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Salvation of all those dear-bought Souls for which he died, the joyful Assurance of so happy a Success, would have eas'd the Burthen of his Grief; his Torments, all of them, would have been welcom upon that condition. But to sweat Blood in vain, to be scourg'd to no purpose, to spend the last drop of his sacred Veins to no effect, was an Affliction not to be supported, without praying his Eternal Father to have pity and compassion on him: *Father, if it be possible, Matt. 26. 30.* dispence at least with this Part of my Sentence, Let me die; but do not let me die in vain.

'Tis said of *Joseph* in the Book of *Genesis*, Ch. 45. 15. *He kiss'd all his Brethren, and wept over every one of them.* I may say the same of *Jesus* in the Garden of *Gethsemane*: He griev'd for All his Brethren, and wept over every one of them in particular. He saw before his Eyes the Sins of every Person in the World; the Graces which he would from time to time bestow upon us, the Neglect of all his Offers, and Abuse of all his Favours. He foresaw every Temptation which we yield to, and griev'd to see it. He foresaw each Prophanation of the *Sacrament*, which we frequent unworthily, and fainted with grief, when he thought

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how often his most precious Blood; would by our Fault become the Poyson of our Souls. He foresaw, in the whole Course of our Lives, where, when, and how, we would resist, and render ineffectual, all the Directions, Admonitions, and Exhortations of his Ministers, and *fell into a bloody Sweat* at the very thought of our Ingratitude, by which the chief Means of attaining Everlasting Happiness serve only, in the End, to justify our Sentence of Eternal Misery, *Isa. 35. 4, 6. He bore our Grievs, He carried our Sorrows, He took upon him the Iniquities of us All;* and every one our most grievous Sins, appear'd to him in a more hideous Shape, than ever it appear'd to any Creature.

Mortal Sin is as *Bad* as God is *Good*. It separates us from our God, and leaves our Souls as *Empty* as our God is *Great*. So that, as God is infinitely Good, the Malice of a Mortal Sin is infinitely Evil. As none of us can understand the infinite *Goodness* of the one, so none of us are able to conceive the infinite *Malice* of the other. Christ himself, as God, could comprehend them both: As Man, he comprehended neither. But yet, the clear and full *Idea* he had of it, was proportion'd to his beatifick Vision of God's Essence, and
by

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by consequence, the *perfectest* that ever was. His clearest *Sight*, and ardent *Love* of God, were in a manner infinite : So were his *Knowledge* and his *Hatred* of all Mortal Sin. And the *Impression* this *Idea* made upon him, was the *chief*, if not the *only* Reason, why our Saviour could not hold from telling his Disciples, *Matt. 16. 38. My Soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death.* His Soul was overwhelmed with such a Deluge of Affliction, that his Grief, not being able to contain it self within the Bounds of Nature, violently forc'd it self through all his Pores, in Tears of Blood.

Ah my dear Jesus! when shall I be able to make such a perfect Act of true Contrition for my Sins, as Thou hast made for mine ! When shall I be able to say, *My Soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death !* When shall I lament my grievous Sins in Tears of Blood ! *Jer. 9. 1. Give me, at least, Water to my Head, and Fountains to my Eyes.* No Contrite Heart, but Thine, bleeds otherwise than at the Eyes ; and 'tis (I hope) enough for me, if I can be so sorry for my Sins, as to lament them all the Days I have to live, and rather *Die* than ever *Sin* again.

IV.

The Saints Idea of Sin. How much it humbles Them.

T Here's Nothing but the Grace of Jesus Christ, can make us Saints. There's nothing else can make us *clearly see, and heartily detest* the Malice of our Sins. The greater Share we have of this great Grace, the more we *see it, and detest it*; so much more we *fear and tremble at* the very thought of it; and as our Grace encreases, we grow every Day more *humble* by remembering it.

To make this out, I need not write the Lives of all the Saints. A *Pattern* is enough to judge of all the *Piece*,
Deg. 5. especially such a one as *S. John Climacus*, an ancient Father of the Church, has left behind him.
A^t. 20. He assures us, his Relation is no *Fable*; He affirms, that what he
Art. 2. says, He *sa*w with his own Eyes;
Ar. 27. and that He was a *whole Month* in their Company.

Draw near, *says he*, all You who have provok'd the Wrath of God by your Offences: Come, and hear the Wonders He was pleas'd to let me *see*, for my Edification: Be attentive to my Words, All You who have a mind to

re-

IV. *An Humble Heart.* 179

reconcile your selves to God, by a sincere Conversion.

‘When I was, says he, in the Monastery of Penitents, I saw Men so extreamly humbled with the grievous Weight of their Offences, that their Cries and Prayers to God, would even move the Stonesthemselves. With Heads bow’d down, and Eyes upon the Ground, I heard them say: *We confess, O Lord, we confess, that we deserve to suffer all Chastisement; and Afflictions; because our Sins are such, that should we summon all the Universe to weep for us, the Tears of all the World would never make sufficient Satisfaction. There remains one only thing we ask, one only thing we pray for, Psal. 6. 1. That Thou never mayest correct us in thy Anger, nor chastise us in thy great Displeasure; but a little spare us, through thy infinite Mercy. ’Tis enough, O Lord, that Thou deliver us from those inexplicable Torments hidden in the Centre of the Earth. We dare not ask a full and perfect Pardon: We, who have not kept the holy Laws of our Profession, but have broken them again, when Thou hadst given us the most endearing Marks of Love and Mercy, in forgiving of our Sins.*

‘Whoever saw them Laugh? Whoever heard amongst them any idle Talk? Whoever could observe, that any Passion transported them? Or any Anger

' Anger mov'd them? Alas! they hard-
 ' ly knew what Anger was; their great
 ' Affliction and continual Grief, had now
 ' extinguish'd in them all Emotions of
 ' Resentment. There was never known
 ' the least appearance of Dispute; the
 ' least lashing out in Discourse; the
 ' least sign of Vainglory. There was no
 ' Jollity of Feasting, no Concern for the
 ' Body, no love of Ease and Pleasure, no
 ' Thought of Wine, no Use of Fruits, no
 ' Care for Delicacies pleasing to the Pa-
 ' late. The Desire of all such things was
 ' quite extinct. And after all, there was
 ' not to be found the least Censorious-
 ' ness, or least Appearance of an Inclina-
 ' tion, to judge their Neighbours.

' Some of them, now and then, would
 ' knock their Breasts; and, as if they
 ' were already at the Gate of Heaven,
 ' *Open us, said they, O Judge of Mankind,*
 ' *Open us the Gate of Happiness, which we*
 ' *have shut by Sin.* Others would say, *Luke*
 ' *1. 79. Give Light to us, O Lord, who sit*
 ' *in Darkness, in the Shades of Death, and*
 ' *guide our Steps into the Way of Peace.* O-
 ' thers again; *Will the Almighty look upon*
 ' *us any more? Is't possible to pay our Debts,*
 ' *and satisfie for our Offences? Will our God,*
 ' *once more afford us any Comfort? We are*
 ' *laid in Chains of Sin; and shall we one Day,*
 ' *hear him say, Come forth?* ' They

IV. *An Humble Heart.* 181

‘ They always had their Hour of
 ‘ Death before their Eyes; and some-
 ‘ times they would say to one another;
 ‘ *What will then become of us; What Sen-*
 ‘ *tence will our God pronounce upon us? What*
 ‘ *will be our End? Shall we be then call’d*
 ‘ *home from Banishment, to which we have*
 ‘ *been hitherto condemn’d for our Offences?*
 ‘ *Shall such Criminals as we, find any fa-*
 ‘ *vour then? Such Sinners as we are, such*
 ‘ *miserable Wretches, cover’d with Confusion*
 ‘ *and Darknes. Have our Prayers mounted*
 ‘ *to the Throne of God? Or, have they been*
 ‘ *rejected, as they well deserve? If well re-*
 ‘ *ceived, how far have, they prevail’d?*
 ‘ *Have they obtain’d a full Discharge, or on-*
 ‘ *ly Part? Alas! they could not have much*
 ‘ *force, proceeding from such Mouths, so sin-*
 ‘ *ful, so impure, as Ours.*

‘ At other times, they thus discours’d
 ‘ their Fears and Doubts: *What think*
 ‘ *you Brethren? Do you think that we ad-*
 ‘ *vance? Do you think that we obtain the*
 ‘ *effect of our Demands? Do you think, that*
 ‘ *God will once again receive us? Do you*
 ‘ *think, He’ll open us the Gates of Heaven?*
 ‘ *Who can tell, (said the Ninevites,) who*
 ‘ *knows; but God may change the Sentence*
 ‘ *which He has pronounc’d against us? Tho’*
 ‘ *perhaps, He will not free us from the rigo-*
 ‘ *rous Chastisements which we have deserv’d.*
 ‘ *How-*

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‘ However, Let us labour all we can, and do-
 ‘ whatever we are able. If He open us the
 ‘ Gate of Heaven, we are Happy ; if he does
 ‘ not, He is Just : And therefore, never let us
 ‘ cease to bless Him. Doubtful, as we are, of
 ‘ what may be our Destiny, we must continue
 ‘ all our Life, still knocking at the door. Per-
 ‘ haps our Importunity, our Constancy, and our
 ‘ Perseverance, may find Admittance in the
 ‘ End.

Behold the Language of the Saints !
 Consider, how their Fear and Trembling
 humbles them, in Presence of their angry
 God. Consider the *Idea* which They
 have of Sin ; how different it is from
 what we generally have. Consider the
Impression which it makes upon them, and
 compare it with our Stupidness, our
 Hardness, our Insensibility. Conclude
 with shame and sorrow that this Diffe-
 rence twixt them and us, proceeds not
 from their having been much greater
 Sinners than we are, but from our being
 much less Saints, than They.

‘ When any of these Penitents drew
 ‘ nigh the Hour of Death, how Terri-
 ‘ ble, how Lamentable was the Specta-
 ‘ cle ! These Blessed Criminals, when
 ‘ any one of their Companions was up-
 ‘ on the point of leaving them, They
 ‘ All surrounded him, with aking Hearts,
 ‘ and

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and weeping Eyes, to ask him, How do you find your self, Dear Brother, Dear Companion in our Miseries and Sufferings? What say you now? What do you hope? What do you think? Have you obtain'd what you have labour'd for, with so much pain? Or, is your labour lost? Are you arriv'd at the Port? Or, are you not? Have you a full Assurance of your Happiness? Or, have you only an uncertain Hope? Do you find your self in perfect Liberty of Mind? Or, are you yet in Trouble and Anxiety? Have you heard already, in the Secret of your Soul, a Voice, which tells you, Matth. 9. 2. Your Sins are forgiven you? Or, do you seem to hear that formidable Sentence, Psal. 9. 17. The Wicked shall be turn'd into Hell? What say you, Brother? Tell us, we conjure you, tell us now sincerely; that by knowing what Condition you are in at present, we may guess, what State we may be in one day, our selves.

To these Demands, some of these dying Penitents made Answer, Psal. 66. 20. Blessed be God, who has not turn'd away my Prayer, nor his Mercy from me. Others, in a doleful Tone, reply'd, Ps. 124. 4. Can our Soul go over the Stream of Water, which are like to overwhelm us? This they said, not being yet assur'd of their Salvation; but considering with fear

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'*fear and trembling, what might happen to them in the terrible Accompt which now was nigh at Hand. And others answer'd more uncomfortably; Woe be to the Soul that hath not kept inviolably all the Laws of its Profession. See, the Hour is come, the only Hour in which we shall begin to know our State for all Eternity.*

These Blessed Penitents, for one Relapse, did *Penance*, the severest they were able to invent: And we, for numberless Relapses, many of them worse than theirs, do none at all. These Penitents *Persever'd* in the same Austerities till Death, their *Penance* had no End: We still *Persevere* in our Sins, our *Penance* never begins. Their *Fear and Trembling*, their profound *Humility*, went Hand in Hand with all their *Penance* and *Perseverance*: Our *Confidence* and *Unconcernedness*, our extravagant *Presumption*, always keep an equal pace with our *Tepidity* and *Slothfulness*. Dear Christians, give me leave to ask, Why all this difference 'twixt them and us? A thousand years, betwixt their Age, and this which now we live in, have they alter'd the *Almighty*? Has He less *Authority* to punish us? Or, we less *Obligation* to Obey Him, Honour Him, and make Him *Satisfaction*, if we do not? Is our God less *Just*, because we more abuse his

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his Mercy? Or *more Merciful*, because we less regard his Justice? Alas! Our *Blindness* is the only Reason: We are blinder than they were; and therefore we are more *secure*, more *unconcern'd*, more *proud*, more *tepid*, and more *stothful*.

Jesu, Son of David, have Mercy on me, Luke 18. 38. Thou Blessed Saviour of the World, who enlightnest every Man that comes into it, John 1. 9. Open once, my Eyes, and keep them ever open, that I may continually See and Love thy Goodness, Wisdom, Mercy, Justice; and by the Assistance of so great a Grace, perpetually See and Hate the Malice of my Sins. There's nothing but thy Grace that can enlighten every Man that comes into the World: There's nothing else can Clear my Understanding and Enflame my Heart: There's nothing else can make me truly Contrite, truly Humble. Jesu, Son of David, have mercy on me, a Sinner, Luke 18 38. who am not in the Way, nor going on, but sitting by the way-side, v. 35. begging thy Assistance. Here I sit, and wait thy passing by: My Blindness hinders me from doing any more: And even when I Hear Thee pass, v. 36. I know not how to follow Thee. The Croud of all my Passions, Inclinations and Humours, and the multitude of my Engagements, Cares and Troubles,

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Troubles, make a noise about me; such a one (I fear) as will not let Thee hear me. When I Offer to cry out for help, they try to stop my Mouth, and bid me *hold my peace*, v. 39. And therefore I cry out *so much the more*, *Jesu, thou Son of David, have Mercy on me*, v. 39. Thou need'st not stand to ask me what I want, or *what I will that thou should'st do unto me*, v. 41. Thou, who know'st my Wants so infinitely better than my self. The only Favour which I humbly beg, is, *that I may receive my Sight*, v. 41. Say only, to my Soul, as once Thou said'st to that *Blind Man*, who was a Figure of me; say, *Receive thy Sight; thy Faith hath sav'd Thee*, v. 42. Say but this, (Thy Words are powerful, and make themselves prove true.) Say only This, and then *immediately I shall receive my Sight, and follow Thee*, v. 43. I then shall follow thy Example. I shall follow thy Disciples, and thy Saints. I then shall do fit Penance for my Sins, and shall Persevere in it to the End. I then shall study how to punish every Passion, Inclination and Humour, which induc'd me to Offend Thee. I shall then be truly *Contrite*, truly *Humble*; I shall *Glorifie Thee* all my Life, v. 45, and all the People, when They See the Happy Change, shall give the Praise to God. Amen. THE



THE

CHARACTER

OF
A Good Christian.

SECT. I.

The Perfection of his Duty.

D. Sp. p. 1.
c. 3.

W

Hoever seriously
professes the Re-
ligion of Christ,
and takes the

Gospel for the Rule of that Divine Re-
ligion, making it his Business to acquire
that Sanctity which Jesus Christ de-
mands of his Disciples, is a *Christian*.
The Gospel was not only writ for those
we call *Religious*. We are, all of us,
Religious Persons ; of the Best and
First of all Religions, which is that of
Jesus Christ. We have a *Rule*, a *Habit*,
and a *Founder* ; we have *Works* and *Exer-*
cises. Christ first instituted and esta-
blish'd our Religion : He's the *Found-*
er of our Order. Innocence and San-
ctity make up the *Habit*, we receive in
Baptism. Our Promises of abrenoun-
cing

cing all the Pumps and Works of Satan, are our *Vows*. The Gospel is our Rule; our Prayers, Penances, and generally all good Actions, are our *Execises*.

Do you think, the Gospel was
Ibid. not written, says St. Basil, every
jot as much for married Persons, as for Monks? Undoubtedly 'tis by this Rule that both are to be judg'd. 'Tis well if married People can obtain God's Pardon, for the Faults committed in that State. In all things else, they are as much oblig'd to live like Saints, as the Religious are. The Tyes of Marraige, and Engagements of the World, will never justifie an idle Life; or any Way dispence with the laborious Task of living like a Christian. 'Tis lawfull to live in the World; but not, to live according to the Maxims of it. On the contrary, the more we are expos'd to the Temptations of the Devil, so much more we are oblig'd to use our utmost Care and Vigilance.

Believe not, says St. Chrysostom, that God expects from worldly Men, a Sanctity quite different from that of Monks. 'Tis true, indeed, that Those may marry, and These may not: But in all things else, the Case is equal. They have Both receiv'd the same Laws, and Both are subject to the same Punishments. When Jesus laid his Curse upon the

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the Rich, and those who lead a jolly Life in
Sensuallity and Pleasure, when he spoke of
the Evangelical Beatitudes ; He spoke, not
only to Religious, but to all the Faithful,
and without the least Exception. He was ne-
ver heard to say, That the Religious Man
shall suffer for his Sins, but not the Secular.
The difference we fancy in this Point, is only
an Invention of Men ; it is not grounded in
the Word of God, who equally obliges All,
that will be sav'd, to keep his Laws. St.
Paul, addressing his Discourse to married
Persons, does not require of them as great
a share of Sanctity, as we can find in the
most perfect Monks? What Disengagement he
prescribes to all of us ! What Moderation in
our Cloaths, our Diet, and our use of Riches!
1 Tim. 68. Having Food, says he, and
Raiment, let us be contented, 1 Cor. 7.
29, 30, 31. They who are married, let
them be, as if they were not ; and They
who use the World, as if they us'd it
not ; What more can we expect from those
we call Religious ? Let us therefore never
say, That Worldly Men are either not ob-
lig'd, or else not able to observe the Rules
of Christianity ; and that Religious only
can attain to such sublime Perfection. There
is Nothing so pernicious as this false Opini-
on. It maintains the greatest part of Liber-
tines in their Disorders, and encourages im-
perfect

perfect Souls to lead a loose and lazy Life. Assure your selves, our God requires of All, one self-same Sanctity. The Means of our arriving to it, may be different; but yet Religious Persons have no other Aim than we have. They design to save themselves, and so do we. They are not to be sav'd, but by the narrow Way; and we shall never be sav'd by walking in the broad one.

Hence it follows clearly, *Ibid.* that the Gospel being preach'd and made for All, we All are bound to follow it; we All must labour to acquire the Sanctity demand'd by it; we must All be thoroughly perswaded, that it is the only way which leads to Heaven, and that every other way is sure to end in everlasting Death. 'Tis true, the Methods and the Exercises which are us'd and follow'd in Religious Houses, to arrive to such Perfection, are quite different from what is usually prescrib'd to worldly Persons: But their *Vertues* always are the same, altho' their *Exercises*, are not. These two things we commonly confound; to wit, the *Exercises* and the *Vertues* of a Christian. We imagine, for Example, that a modest and a homely Dress, is only fit for Cloisters, where they always wear a certain *Habit*, poor and plain. We fancy that

that the *Recollection* which is practis'd in Religious Houses, is a thing peculiar to their Character; because we find, that only they have certain Hours allotted them for keeping Silence. We imagine also, that a *Penitential* Life belongs to none but them; because they Fast, and practice several *Austerities* commanded by Superiours. 'Tis a great mistake. These *Vertues* all are *Evangelical*: We find them in the Gospel, which is *ours* as much as *theirs*: They are prescrib'd to *all Men* by the *Common Rule* of Christianity: And, tho' we have not (as *Religious* have) so great Advantages to make the practise of them Uniform and Easie: Nevertheless, we All are indispensibly oblig'd to have them, and to practise them. Our *Modesty*, our Moderation must be known to *All*, Phil. 45. as well as theirs. Our *Recollection* of Mind, must be preserv'd amidst the multitude of our Employments. We are equally oblig'd to *Mortify* and Circumcise our Heart, and to Extinguish in it, all our Sensual Desires. The Precept of *Continual Prayer*, Thef. 5. 17. Is as much for us as them. We are not bound to sing in Choir, at certain Hours, as they do: But our Heart must be, as much as theirs, continually

annually united to our God, by Loving of
him above all things. Tho' we have
not made a Vow of Poverty, yet we must
be, as well as They, entirely disengag'd
from all the Riches of the Earth, and
never set our Hearts upon them, whilst
we use them. Tho' we have not vow'd
Obedience, we are all oblig'd, as much
as they, to be attentive to the Precepts
of our Founder Jesus Christ, and pun-
ctually observe the least of his Com-
mandments, Matth. 5. 19.

Behold the Duty of a Christian! See
 how Generous, how Noble, how Heroi-
 cal his *Resolution* is, of making good the
 full Signification of his Name! He meets
 with an infinity of Obstacles: But not-
 withstanding all, He is resolv'd to *Sacri-*
fice and *Save* himself: He is resolv'd to
 use all *Violence*, whatever may be requi-
 site, to make his Way to *Heaven*, and to
take it even by force, Matth. 11. 12.

S E C T. II.

His Contempt of the World.

S. Chrysostom. Hom. 24. in **H** *Ep. ad Hebr.* *HE* always looks up-
 on himself, as a
 meer Stranger in this
 World; and the conti-
 nual Remembrance of his being so, is
 the Foundation and Root of all his
 Vertue

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Vertue. He takes little pleasure in employing of his busy thoughts about this Life, and the Affairs relating to it; but is like a banish'd Man, who lives uneasy in a foreign Country; always looking homeward with extream Impatience, to see the blessed Place which gave him Birth; and always doing all he can, to lay all things in readiness for his Return, He never is dejected with Adversity, nor puffed up with Prosperity, which happen to attend his Fortune here; but passes unconcernedly by, without regarding either; and without the least stop in his way, pursues his Journey, like a Traveller, who longs to be at Home, and thinks of nothing else, but how to make hast thither. And this is the Reason, why our God obliges him to say, in his daily Prayer, *Thy Kingdom come*; that he may always have before his Eyes, the happy Day which is to be the Last, and generously scorn to value any transitory Honour, Profit, Pleasure, which he meets with upon Earth.

A Christian, by these Noble Sentiments of true and solid Wisdom, mounts to such a height above the reach

S. Chrysostom.
Hom. 15. ad Popul. Antiochen.

of all this World, that he is hardly
 capable of feeling, much less of admiring,
 whatsoever passes in it. He is like
 a Man, who from the top of an aspiring
 Mountain, takes a view of all below
 him, and can hardly see the Towns
 and Cities, which appear like Mole-hills;
 where the numerous Inhabitants, like
 swarms of Ants, run up and down,
 and follow eagerly their little Trade
 of hoarding up a petty Treasure which
 is nothing to his purpose. All his Treasure
 and his Heart, are both in Heaven.
 There his loving Eye is generally
 fix'd; and, if he now and then look
 down upon the Riches, Glory, Power,
 Honour of this miserable World, they
 all seem trifling Matters; all such
 Things are little, inconsiderable, and
 contemptible, to Him.

And yet he cannot
 S. Chrysostom. justly be accus'd of
Hom. 11. in Epist. Pride, because he
 1 Cor. thinks, the wisest Politicians
 are but *fools*; their Riches, *Shadows*; and all their
 Pleasures, *Dreams*; and all their Titles,
 Dignities, and Honours, only *Childrens*
Baubles. No; it cannot justly be accounted
 Pride. 'Tis certainly the greatest
 Wisdom to submit our Judgments,
 and

§. 2. *a Good Christian.* 195

and conform them, to the External Truth of God himself; and judge of things, as they are truly in themselves. Or otherwise we must allow, that *Solomon* himself was guilty of Presumption and Arrogance; when after a full Tryal, after long and sad Experience, He, pronounc'd, that all the World is *Vanities, and nothing else but Vanity.*

He labours all he can to make his *Soul* become *S. Chryso-* a Heaven upon Earth; from *Rom. 16* and fails not to suc in *Epist. ad* ceed in such a Noble *Heb.*

Enterprize. The Heaven which we see, and so admire, is but an Emblem of his Happiness. As Heaven is enlightened by the rising Sun, his Soul is more enlightened by the Grace of God, the Sun of Justice, which arises without setting, in his Heart. As Heaven always is the same; still beautiful and bright within it self, altho' the midnight Darkness seem to alter and obscure it; so his Soul is still the same; 'tis always easie and content within it self, altho' he live obscurely in disgrace or poverty, and seem a miserable Man to those who little understand the Secret of his Happiness. As Heaven is so high above the Winds and Storms, that the most violent
I 2 'distur-

disturbance of the Air can never reach it; so the Soul of a good Christian, even when the World combines to make him suffer most, receives no harm at all. His Treasure is in Heaven, and his Heart is with it. He's above the reach of all that they can do. His Heart is rais'd to such a height, that when he takes a prospect of the Earth below. He sees no difference 'twixt Men and Pismires. Neither are the Poor the only Objects that seem little in his Sight; but Kings themselves, and Generals of Armies, Politicians, Usurers, and what you please, seem every jot as little and contemptible as They. The Difference of Poor and Rich makes no impression upon Him; no more than when he sees amongst a Swarm of little Pismires, some creep loaded, and others empty.

What can Men do to such a Man as This, S. Chrysostom, *Hom. 5. ad Popul. Antio.* suppose they have a mind to make him miserable? Will they rob him of his Money? All his Riches are in Heaven. Will they Banish him from Home? He has no other *Home* but Heaven; and it is not in their Power to Banish him from thence. Will they lay him fast in Chains? His Conscience will

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will still be free: And, for his part, He fears no other Chains but those of Sin. Or, will they kill him? When they have done this, They have no more to do: and even then, his Soul, will live for ever, his Body one day rise again.

A Man who lives not but for Jesus S. Chrysostom, Christ, is quite above *lib. 2. ad Theod.* the reach of all Mis- *lapsum. c. 3.* fortunes that can

threaten him. Provided that He will not freely and deliberately hurt himself, no Man alive can have the least advantage over Him. He's invincible at all Arms. The loss of his Goods is no Affliction to him, because he well considers, that we all bring nothing with us at our Birth; and that we all shall carry nothing with us at our Death. The vain desires of Reputation and Honour cannot seize his Heart; because he knows that all our Conversation ought to be in Heaven. All the Injuries and Outrages he meets with, are not able to provoke him; he's a Christian: And, being truly such, he fears but one great Danger of one only loss; the danger of offending God, and losing of his Favour; all things else, as Banishment and Poverty, with all the greatest and most

dangerous Extremities, he values not at all; and even Death it self, which others think so Terrible, is always most agreeable, most comfortable, and most welcome, whensoever it comes.

S E C T. III. *Of his*

His desire of Heaven.

THE Scripture generally represents a Christian, as a Person disengag'd and separated from the World. If you were of the World, says our Saviour. St. Jo. 15. 19. the World would love his own; but because you are not of the World, and I have chosen you out of the World, therefore the World hates you, 1 Jo. 2. 15. He loves not the World, nor the things that are in the World. Because, if any Man love the World, the love of God is not in him, Rom. 12. 2. He is not conform'd to the World, but transform'd by the renewing of his Mind, that He may prove what is the good, the acceptable and perfect Will of God, 1 Cor. 7. 31. He uses the World, as if he us'd it not, Gal. 6. 14. The World is crucifi'd to him, and He is to the World, Colos. 3. 3. He is dead, and his Life is hid with Christ in God, Jam. 1. 27. His Religion pure and undefil'd, is that by which he keeps himself unspotted from the World, 1 Pet. 2. 11. He abstains from all desires which War against the Soul, because he is a Stranger and a Pilgrim in the World. But that which most inclines him

him to desire the Happiness of Heaven,
is his *knowing*, that as long as he is here,
He's *Absent* from his God, 2 Cor. 5. 6.

No wonder he so much

desires to be in Heaven: D. Sp. Par.

All his Comfort is his Hope 2. Cha. 21.

of being there. The Gate

so strait; the Way so narrow; the con-

tinual Violence so necessary to be us'd:

The Cross he daily bears; the Self-denial

which he always practises, Luke 13. 3.

The Penance, without which we All shall

Perish, if we do not mortify our Passi-

ons, curb our Humours, and resist our

Inclinations: All this put together, is

enough to make a Christian Life, so

painful, troublesome, and disagreeable;

that, 1 Cor. 15. 19. *If in this Life only He had*

hope, he would of all Men, be most miserable.

'Tis no wonder therefore he

so much desires the Sight of God, *Ibid.*

which only can deliver him from all

the Miseries he labours under, Ch. 22.

'Tis the great Affliction of the Just; to

see themselves so far from *Sion*, separa-

ted from their God, and banish'd from

their Heavenly *Jerusalem*. Altho' the

Riches of the World were all their

own, they still would think themselves

Unfortunate, because their Treasure is

not *here*; 'tis only to be found *hereafter*.

They

They as earnestly desire the Happiness of Heaven, as a Heart long haunted thirsts for Water. 'Tis a Duty indispensably incumbent upon all true Christians, to Desire it above All Things.

Hear S. Austin, He who finds himself at Ease on Earth; who is contented to live always Here;

and finds the greatest Joy and Satisfaction in this World will never enter Heaven. If you ask the Reason, he replies: Because He has not in his Heart the Love of God, whoever does not Sigh, and above all things Wish, for the enjoyment of Eternal Life. Examine well your Heart. If God should promise you a long Life upon Earth, and tell you, You shall here enjoy whatever you can wish for; Riches, Pleasures, Honours, Health, Prosperity, and what you please beside, shall every where attend you Only; You shall never see me; You shall never have a Share with me in Heaven: Would you be content? Whoever is in such a Disposition, does not yet begin to love Him above all Things.

Hear the Royal Prophet: Ibid. Ch. 22. Hear the Language of his

Love. As the Heart pants after Water, so my Soul pants after Thee my God, Psal. 42. 1, 2, 3. My Soul is thirsty for Thee, O Thou living God, the only Life and comfort of my Soul. My Tears have been my Entertainment Day and Night;

and

And 'tis the only Ease of my impatient Grief, to have the liberty of weeping in thy absence. *When shall I appear before my God? When once that happy Day approaches, when I once behold thy Face, I shall be satisfi'd, Ps. 17. 15. but never shall be satisfied till then. 'Tis this, and only this one Thing, I always have desir'd of Thee, that I may dwell in thy House for ever, and behold thy Beauty, Ps. 27. 4.*

All God's Children say the same; they daily pray to their *Ibid.* Eternal Father, that his Kingdom come: and their desire of everlasting Life, tho' sometimes out of mind, is always in their Heart. By this, they pray incessantly. By this, they are attentive to God's Presence, in the midst of those Employments and Affairs, which otherwise would easily divert them from the Thoughts of him. By This they frequently Recal their wandring Thoughts, Renew their decaying Fervour, Enflame their cooling Love, Encourage their desponding Hearts, and march a great deal faster towards Heaven. When the Scripture commands us, says S. Austin, to pray always; we are not therefore oblig'd to be always on our Knees, or always singing Psalms in Choir: We on'y are oblig'd to have continually, in the bottom of our Heart, a true Desire to leave this Earth, and enter into Heaven. This continual desire must

202 *The Character of, &c.* §. 3.

' must still preserve in our Heart. We al-
' ways much lament, and sigh, and say, I am a
' Captive and a Pilgrim, I am far from
' Home, I am not with my God. 'Tis true (S.
' Austin adds,) a Just Man may divert
' himself sometimes, and spend some
' hours, in such Employments as appear
' quite different from gaining Heaven. 'Tis
' alas! the Servitude of his Captivity,
' which thus obliges him to work for the
' Egyptians, whilst he is a Slave to Pha-
' raoh. But however, in the midst of all
' his Slavery, He never can forget the
' Land of Promise; He laments, He sighs,
' He always wishes to be there: And
' Thus He always prays to God that He
' will please to grant him the Possession
' of that Sovereign Good, which only
' can Suffice to make Him truly and for
' ever Happy.

F I N I S.

VIIa Approbatione Eximii ac Peril-
lustris Domini, *** Presbyteri, S.
Theologiæ Doctoris, *** approbo e.o
Librum Anglicano Idiomate compo-
situm, cui titulus est, *A Contrite and Hum-
ble Heart; with Motives and Considerations
to prepare it.* D. D. 16 Martii. 1693.

N. J. DELA V. S. T. Doct.
& Prof. Prædicator & Visitor &
Censor, & D. Rector.



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